AKWESASNE NOTES

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A JOURNAL FOR NATIVE AND NATURAL PEOPLES

IN THIS ISSUE:

Traditionalism: The Wave of the Future 4

There exists the potential for a real cultural revitalization based on a loose coalition of peoples who share similar spiritual beliefs and objectives across the Western Hemisphere. This essay points the way.

U.N. NEWS: Working Group Established to Monitor Violations of Indian Rights 6

For the first time a permanent U.N. body has been established to deal with the treatment of Indians and other indigenous peoples.

Nicaragua — Revolutionary Contradictions: Sandinistas and Miskitos in Nicaragua 7

Guatemala — One Struggle, Many Fronts 11

Spirit of Crazy Horse 12

(An interview with Leonard Peltier.

SHORT NOTES 16

JAMES BAY: The Sacrifice of a Cree People 18

THE WOMEN WHO FIGHT: The Western Shoshone Struggle 23

BIG MOUNTAIN UPDATE 26

The Vaccination of the Yanomami 27

Book Reviews 28

BACK ISSUES FOR $10.00

A set of back issues of AKWESASNE NOTES is available for $10.00 per set. There are, as supplies hold, approximately eighteen issues of the newspaper in a set.

Early issues of AKWESASNE NOTES are no longer in print, and our current stock is dwindling. Therefore, we make this offer to people who may have a need of this invaluable repository of information.

PLEASE NOTE: Back issues are mailed only three times yearly during November, April and July.

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If you would like to support these efforts and receive the benefit of a tax–deductible contribution your check should be made out to Akwesasne Notes/The Youth Project, and sent to us here at NOTES.

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HOW IT IS WITH US

All of us have lost something, a vital something — we've lost control, as individuals and as small communities, over our lives in terms of controlling our food supply, education, health care, government, economy, right to have children, and family structure. We don't see that this has happened because most of the English-speaking world supports "individualism," which is the right of individuals to develop their talents and skills to benefit *themselves only*. We see young people today who expect to get paid for any, and every, task they perform. They say to us, "I don't care about anyone except me — I'm number one." They do not have small networks of people, i.e. family, friends, neighbors, whom they relate to and with whom they feel a sense of sharing and responsibility. They do not feel a sense of responsibility for the safety and well-being of the other people in their world.

Here at the *Notes*, we have many visitors who express to us that they are disillusioned with the world as it presently is. They are seeking an elusive "direction," "a sense of usefullness," "self-identity," "belonging." We see this as a symptom of a larger problem.

That problem is the loss of control over our lives. I've asked the "Old Ones" and some not-so-old ones why it is this way. They tell me that fifty years ago a person's world was much smaller, closer. A person related to those people within walking distance. Many have told me of the gatherings of neighbors to help each other plow fields, build barns, make maple syrup, cut wood, harvest gardens, etc..

They tell me also that everyone knew the people from whom they bought or traded meat, cheese butter, milk, eggs, vegetables, flour, farm animals, and so forth. Products were made locally, not in a far-away factory. Products were made to last a long time and were repairable. The plastic, disposable products of today were not practical or logical.

People depended on each other for food, material goods, social relationships and health care. Most importantly, they knew a sense of belonging. It was a concrete reality. Individuals within these numerous "mini-societies" were encouraged, in fact they were *required* to develop their individual talents, abilities and skills for the *survival of the community*. Being an identifiable, vital, necessary and essential part of the community gave people their sense of belonging. Cooperatgion with the human beings in your life is a Way of Life — a necessity for survival.

CCM

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The staff of *Akwesasne Notes* would like to extend a special THANK YOU to Ms. Ann Maytag for her generous contribution of the use of the typesetter with which this issue was produced. Her contribution will enable us to continue and expand our work.

COVER – OLD WINTER COUNT (SIOUX)
Photo Credit: Richard Erdoes

AKWESASNE NOTES is the official publication of the Mohawk Nation at Akwesasne.

NATION PROJECTS

In the course of Nation re-building at Akwesasne, a number of projects have emerged from the people. The following are lists of needs that we have gathered and want to pass along to our readers. All these low-budget projects work cooperatively, and are manned by volunteers who labor at Mohawk Nation subsistence wages in the hopes that our next generation will inherit a more sovereign and self-sufficient community. More detailed information about any of them can be obtained by writing to: AKWESASNE NOTES, Mohawk Nation, Via Rooseveltown, N.Y. 13683.

NEEDED FOR

AKWESASNE NOTES: Felt markers, pens (red and black), 3 × 5" business cards, scissors, straplers, canon copier paper, 35 MM B§W film, information on crafts fairs, Pow-wows and other gatherings this summer in the North-east Region;

Akwesasne Freedom School: portable typewriters, 16MM sound projectors, slide projectors, gardening tools, information on appropriate technology projects;

Akwesasne Emergency Team: All types of ambulance emergency equipment, first aid bandages,materials on medical training programs, community health, C-B Radio equipment;

Mohawks Agreed On Safe Health (M.A.S.H.): environmental researchers, blank file folders, information on water-distillation systems and on legal cases impacting communities affected by chemical contamination;

Akwesasne Freedom Radio: 2 tape-editing machines, 2 reel-to-reel tape players, 2 cassette decks, two turntables;

Akwesasne Birthing Crew: Old sheets and bedding,oto-opthalamascopes, blood pressure cuffs, film-35MM, carousel slide projector and carousel, basal body thermometers, comfrey roots, plants, infant clothing, recieving blankets.

Emergency Response International Network (E.R.I.N.): cassette tape recorders, typewriters, information on telex and movement telex hookups for rapid information-dissemination, volunteer lay-out artist for poster series.

Tax-deductible donations can be accepted by all of the above-projects.

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5

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This season we are featuring an exciting line of local, hand-made craft items. Including: Corn Husk Dolls, Beadwork and Ribbon Shirts. As well as our Books, Calendars, and Posters. (Our baskets have been temporarily discontinued.) $1.00

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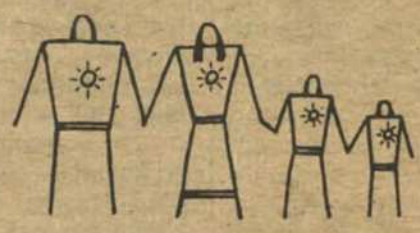

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TRADITIONALISM

The Wave of the Future

Not so long ago, it was possible to pick up a number of newspapers, journals, magazines and other publications and to read analyses about how the world was being threatened by some kind of mass conspiracy. That conspiracy, we were told, took the form of the mysterious and dreaded Trilateral Commission, and was headed by tremendously wealthy families such as the Rockefellers and Cabots and so forth. We were told, that we were all victims of something called world monopoly capitalism, and that we needed to organize and to struggle against its dangers.

There are fewer voices today issuing this clarion call. Many of the Left's newspapers have fallen victim to inflation and the apathy of a readership which has grown weary of reading the same tale week after week, mongh after month. The political right has taken the offensive. Following Reagan's election to the Presidency, there seems to be a widespread feeling that the political atmosphere in America is such that the liberals and the Left have all but disappeared..

In the Indian Movement, things aren't a lot better than in the continent at large. A revitalization of the Traditional Indian Movement took place in the late 1960s. Those of us who were there can remember the spirit that began to be stirred during those early years --the Spiritual Unity Caravans, the rebirth of interest in Native cultures, the movement toward Indian controlled Native studies programs at colleges, Alcatraz, Pit River, the founding of AIM, the rise to media prominence of some Traditional and movement Native leaders.

It was a "new" movement in the sense that it sought to establish a Pan-Indian politics. It was based on a widely shared but poorly articulated ideology which saw a return to the "old ways" as a goal but which never was able to agree on what the "old ways" really looked like or how to bring about a return to those ways. The ideology of the Indian movement, circa 1970, was extremely abstract.

As the Movement grew, the sense that there might be some concrete goals grew with it. Indian politicians joined the rising voice of a movement which demanded more legal sovereignty, educators joined a movement which demanded more classroom space and salary lines, community workers in urban areas struggled with each other over whether the ideology of the programs delivering services was to have a traditional flavor or the color of a tool of acculturation.

The early days of the movement were an inspirational time. The Movement, more by popular acclaim than as the result of any specific charismatic leadership, identified itself as "spiritual," a term which many non-Indian supporters and detractors alike seized upon as meaning apolitical. But the Indian Movement (and it is properly titled the Traditional Indian Movement) was and is anything but apolitical. It offered to the world the concept of the synthesis of the emotional and psychological functions usually associated with "religion" with the need to organize in specific ways to struggle with political realities. It pointed to the hard technologies of the West and stated that such technologies threaten life on this planet and create undesirable social conditions, and it offered a path toward cooperation with nature. There was the spark of the development of a kind of Native liberation theology, one with a true grassroots leadership located in the Indian communities. There existed the potential for a real cultural revitalization based on a sort of loose coalition of peoples who shared similar spiritual beliefs and objectives across the Western Hemisphere.

The definition of a Native cultural revitalization, given the nature of oppression suffered by Natural World peoples, is that it must be a political movement which seeks to analyze and counter those forces which are responsible for the destruction of Natural World cultures. It would not be a political movement as we have seen such movements. It would be directed with a priority to give rise to power at the grassroots level, and not at the level of government or quasi-governmental organizations.

In short, it would be a movement which would seek to empower the people first, not a movement to empower a party or a government. It would empower the people at the grassroots through reestablishment of economic and social institutions which benefited and were controlled by the people. Power would rise from the people to their leaders, and would not flow the other way. It would mean that organizations would be created which would function to grow food or to manufacture building materials and the organizations would be composed of workers who would be responsible for designating leadership very much in the same way that clans and villages once operated under pre-colonialist linear organization patterns. It would be a traditional economic organization which would function in the modern world.

The strategy for that change required the rebuilding of the Native spiritual community, not on a national level, but on the local level in such a way that Lakota communities would remain and become stronger Lakota communities, and Apache communities would devote their energies to the strengthening of Apache ways and customs and lifestyle, and so forth.

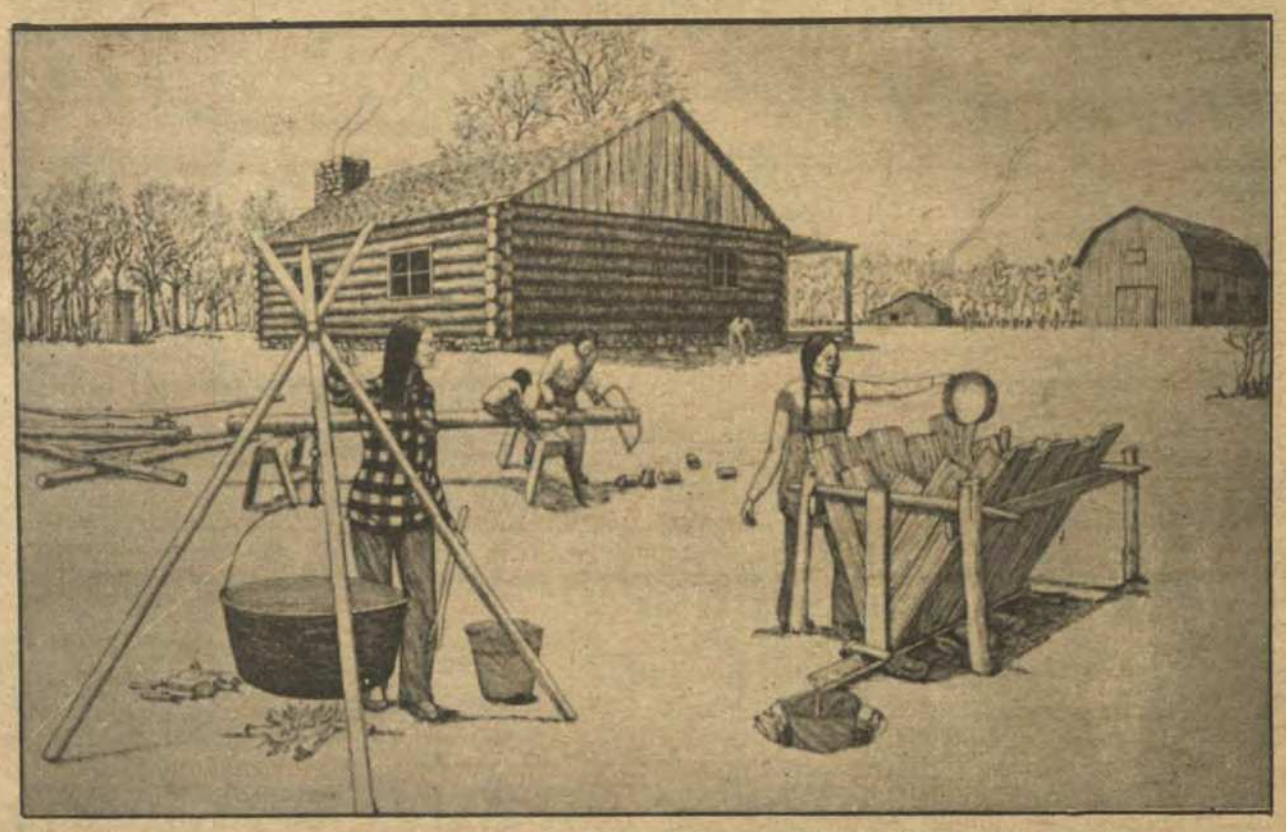
While that vision, or at least aspects of that vision, was vital and central to the movement, the movement grew enormously in strength among the Native people. The best evidence of that growth and its direction was seen at the Longest Walk in 1978 when tens of thousands marched on Washington in support of Native rights. At that gathering, the people issued a position statement to the U.S. government in which they mostly demanded that the U.S. get out of the Indian country. The man who emerged as the leader of that gathering was appropriately Phillip Deere, a man who represents Traditional values and lifestyle and who has an unblemished record and reputation in such traditionally valued characteristics as truthfulness, material simplicity, sobriety, humility and dedication to the well-being of the people.

The Traditional movement, in order to be successful, must be informed of developments in the world. The people and peoples who are invoved in the movement need to be conscious of the fact that they are today part of a struggle against developments which threaten to destroy peoples and cultures globally, and that all the forms of oppression are interrelated. The most profound stories, and the untold stories, of this half of the twentieth century, are the stories of peoples, cultures, and communities all over the globe which are struggling to survive in the face of an assault by transnational corporations and by nation states which seek to exploit their lands, waters, forests, and labor -- in short, all of their resources. The result of that exploitation is necessrily the destruction of whole cultures and peoples, the despoilation of the environment, starvation, dislocation, despair, disease and mass poisoning. The only defense against that kind of onslaught is the revitalization of cultures which can not only resist the assault but which develop enough strength to make gains against it.

Those now-defunct radical newspapers which talked about the existence of a mass conspiracy in the West were right. Almost everyone who reads newspapers is today at least vaguely aware that a very small number of people control most of the West's oil, gas and coal resources, and the term "energy czars" appears in even conservative media. Most people also know that there is a virtual monopoly in the areas of newspaper ownership, magazine production, and electronics communications media, and that although it is not a complete monopoly (contradictions exist), it is clear even to most of the American public that big business has a lot of influence on television, in the movies, newspaper chains and on the American government.

People who have some knowledge of Native affairs know that transnational corporations and vested private interests have been responsible for driving Indian peoples off their lands in Latin America to make way for plantations and oil and gas exploitations, and that Indians are threatened by hydroelectric power projects, mining interests, energy corporations, and the possibility of nuclear waste dumping on their lands. Everywhere the activities of these interests are forcing people off their lands.

TRADITIONALISM IS NOT THE ACT OF SEEKING POWER FOR ONESELF, IT IS THE EFFORT TO EMPOWER THE COMMUNITY AND THROUGH THE COMMUNITY, THE NATION.



Drawing by Kahonhes.

Less well publicized, perhaps, is the fact that transnational corporations are following strategies which promise to lead to world food shortages, if such shortages are not in fact already present. Although the media promotes the myth that there are too many people and not enough land, the fact is that there is enough food produced in the world now to feed its entire population, but productive lands are increasingly in the hands of corporations which seek profits and are not organized for the purpose of producing food for people.

The process is affecting non-Native people as well as Native peoples. While food prices are rising at an alarming rate in the grocery store, some five hundred American farmers go out of business *every week*. At the present rate, it is estimated that in twenty years, one percent of the farms will produce over fifty percent of the food that reaches American markets, and that the average, medium-sized farmer will need $2 million in capital to go into business.

The reason is that a very small number of people who control huge amounts of capital have been able to exercise enough influence in government to create policies which favor monopoly in practically every area of the economy and the small farmer has been all but driven from the market place. The price of food at the consumer level will continue to rise at an alarming rate. The same process is driving farmers off the land in Ohio and Indians off their lands in Guatemala, and essentially the same interests are opening uranium mines in South Dakota and raising the price of milk at the supermarket.

The Native peoples and the average American have a lot more in common than most of them know, because by the end of the century, unless things begin to change, urban dweller and reservation Indian alike will be suffering from the effects of a society nearly totally held captive in the embrace of a world where practically every aspect of life will be controlled by very powerful cliques of corporate managers. There are almost certain to be other, more spectacular effects to this evolution: mass starvation, wars, incredible repression, ecological destruction, disease -- you can probably add to the list as you grasp the dimension of the problem.

The struggle to maintain cultures and communities, to exercise community self-development and economic self-sufficiency, is a struggle against the growing power and control of international monopoly. That is why the Native Traditional Movement is part of an international movement in solidarity against the abuses of the transnational corporations and toward the redevelopment of lifestyles on a human scale. The redevelopment of culture on a human scale is the only practical way that people and peoples can regain control of their lives and their destinies. It must be the primary goal of the Traditional Indian Movement, and other (often as yet unnamed) movements as well. The Native people have called that goal sovereignty, the international community calls it self-determination, and a number of American people refer to it as self-sufficiency, and all of these terms express in some way the nature of the goal.

The redevelopment of culture on a human scale -- that's the goal of the Traditional Indian Movement. By its very definition, including its spiritual objectives, the movement must organize toward that goal. All else will lead to the extermination of our peoples. Any move that is contradictory to that goal is simply not a part of the solution and is too often a part of the problem.

The strategies by which that redevelopment can and must take place will require some changes and sacrifices among those people who are of the Movement. We are engaged in struggle, and it is a struggle for social change which is not much different from the kinds of social change efforts which have met repression in many countries in recent years. To be successful, Indian people need to be aware that discipline has characterized successful struggles in recent years. One element of the struggle waged by the North Vietnamese is especially important. The North Vietnamese made a conscious decision that their soldiers would not be responsible for atrocities committed against the civilian population, and although there has been some propaganda to the contrary in the United States, they in fact developed the image among the Vietnamese peasant population that their soldiers did not wage war against the people.

That was very important. Integrity among both the leadership and their following was a foundation of their struggle. Had they not emphasized discipline among their ranks, they would not have been successful in winning the hearts and minds of the people.

The Traditional Indian Movement needs that same kind of integrity. People are not going to support social change promoted by people who abuse other people. People aren't going to support a movement when its leadership is reported to have engaged in fistfights in barrooms or to have threatened physical violence against elders who were in disagreement with them. Ripoffs of any kind simply can't provide leadership to a movement which seeks to revitalize spiritualism, to attract the hearts and minds of the people. That kind of activitiy doesn't lead to the goal of redevelopment.

Integrity. It is a necessary element of a Traditional Indian struggle. Those of us who have experienced the Movement know that a spiritual movement does not necessarily require charasmatic leaders. The principles of the movement are able to motivate the people even if no leaders arise to represent those principles. The essential thing that must happen in such movements is that the principles of Traditionalism must be shared among the people and the politics of those principles be widely accepted. Once that is accomplished, the major objective becomes organization of the grass roots community around those principles.

The beauty and strength of the traditionalist movement is that it allows the formation of political/cultural organization at the community level in a way that seeks to empower the people in the place where they live. At the same time, it offers a set of shared principles which crosses cultural lines and which makes it possible for there to exist a "national" or "pan-Indian" movement because peoples across a vast geographic area share the same politics and can support the same issues. The Traditional Movement can act as a national entity even though it has litle or no formal organization.

A small circle of very powerful interests (which in North America is called the Ruling Class) is pursuing policies which enrich themselves and which dispossess and impoverish people. The North American Indian peoples are but one specific group of victims of that process. The political forces among Indians which resists that process is the Traditional Indian Movement.

The traditions of the peoples urge that the communities be strengthened through a spiritual practice which preserves their distinct nature. Traditionalism is not the wearing of beads or feathers or an appearance at the Sun Dance or the Antelope Dance or any other kind of dance. It is the effort to establish community identity and the internal strengthening of the community with an emphasis on the preservation of those aspects of pre-Colonial Indian life which makes those communities distinct. It is the recognition that individuals have a responsibility to be active members and participants in the life of their communities.

Traditionalism is not the act of seeking power for oneself, it is the effort to empower the community and through the community, the nation. Our ancestors were not in the habit of raising up dictators as chiefs and medicine men. The Indian people of old prized individuals

who were givers to their community, not takers. A good "citizen" of those societies was a man or woman who acted to benefit others. A great hunter was an honored man because he brought home meat to feed the people, not because he could kill a buffalo barehanded with one blow. A great woman was honored because she saw to the needs of the people, not because she could rabbit dance 72 hours without a break.

Traditionalism means the development of the community and thus the nation. The word has very specific trappings in Hopi or Cree or Onondaga communities, but in all of our cultures it is the politics of community development. The term has been vulgarized in any other context. Traditionalism is not the effort to develop powerful men, it is the effort to develop strong peoples. Powerful medicine people come from strong spiritual communities, not the other way around.

The effort to develop strong communities demands that we act in ways which reflect the strength of integrity. This effort demands that we act to see that the people can feed themselves, house themselves, clothe themselves, and control their childrens' education. Growing food, building housing, helping a neighbor, organizing a food co-op, learning to get along without a grocery store, these are traditionalist activities every bit as much as dancing at the Snake Dance or learning to conduct a (Prairie) Chicken Dance.

Traditionalism continues to be a growing force within the Indian communities. It has matured considerably since 1968. Its adherents today organize at the community level to protect their environment, to educate their children, to promote in some way their cultural identity, to protect their land and water rights. More and more people are learning to develop cooperative modes of productive activity. Little by little the people in the Movement are beginning to become productive.

The self-development of peoples is a powerful set of politics. It is the wave of the future for Indian people, not the ghost of the past. It provides the politics from which will grow the efforts to develop the peoples' culture, to rejoin the people to the spiritual ways, to reenact the respect for the sacred web of life which will provide for the survival of the future generations. Through the unity of hearts and action the people will be empowered.

U.N. news

Working Group Established to monitor violations of Indian rights

MARCH 11, 1982

Yesterday in Geneva, Switzerland, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights adopted an important resolution in support of a Working Group on Indigenous Populations, a measure which had been actively sought by several American Indian groups.

When it is formally approved by the United Nations Economic and Social Council, the Working Group will review developments regarding the rights of indigenous populations, analyze information submitted to it, and give special attention to developing an international covenant for the promotion and protection of the rights of indigenous communities. The Working Group will hold public sessions for five days just prior to the annual meeting of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, in August of each year in Geneva. One of the purposes of the Working Group is to consult with and receive information from indigenous people concerning violation of their rights.

Indians from North, Central and South America first requested the Working Group at a 1977 United Nations Conference on Indians in the Americas. The Indian Law Resource Center, which has consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, participated in the work of drafting the resolution requesting the Working Group and in lobbying for its adoption by the Commission on Human Rights.

The Executive Director of the Indian Law Resource Center, Mr. Robert T. Coulter, called the Commission's action "a major advance in the development of the rights of indigenous peoples."

"It is the first time a permanent United Nations body has been established to deal with the treatment of Indians and other indigenous peoples. For the first time indigenous people will have an official forum for addressing these problems which the national governments have proved unwilling or incapable of addresing."

Mr. Coulter also stated that his office has on several occasions brought human rights complaints against the United States, on behalf of American Indians. Over the last few years, hundreds of complaints about the violation of the human rights of Indians have been submitted to the United Nations.

The resolution adopted March 10, 1982, by the Commissionon Human Rights was passed by a vote of 34 in favor, including the United States, none againstg and seven abstentions. The Netherlands, Senegal, Denmark, Australia, Algeria, New Zealand and Norway were among the strongest supporters of the resolution. Abstentions came from the governments of Brazil, Cuba, the Philippines, Bulgaria, Poland and the Byelorrussian Soviet Socialist Republic. The Economic and Social Council is expected to adopt the resolution at its next session.

Chief Jake Swamp of the Mohawk Nation gave a speech to the Commission in support of the working group. Chief Swamp stated that,

"Existing international law and existing national law do not adequately protect us against the serious threats to our existence. Our cultures, our religions, our governments and our ways of life are all in danger. We are not simply individuals with individual's rights; on the contrary, we exist as distinct peoples, distinct communities, real functioning nations. We hold our lands in common, we hold our cultures and religions as nations and as communities and groups. We are peoples, not simply individuals. For these reasons we face unique problems. Special measures are required to meet these problems. If these measures are not taken, more and more indigenous people may be destroyed and their cultures vanished forever."

Jake Swamp, Mohawk Chief

Curtis Berkey, Esq. representing the Indian Law Resource Center, directed the attention of the Commission to violations of the human rights of Indians in Guatemala, Nicaragua and the United States. Mr. Berkey informed the Commission that "it is apparent that the Guatemalan government is directly responsible for the massacres of Indians which have been occurring in that country." He stated that the policy of Nicaragua which denied basic Indian property rights was a violation of human rights, as was the forced relocation of 10,000 Miskito Indians. However, he deplored those who have exploited the human rights situation in Nicaragua for political reasons. Mr. Berkey told the Commission, "The selective condemnation of violations according to political ideology debases the concept of human rights." The Indian Law Resource Center, he said, wished to disassociate itself "from those who would opportunistically use this situation for political reasons." Over the past few weeks, President Reagan, U.S. Ambassador Kirkpatrick and Secretary of State Haig have publicly criticized the government of Nicaragua for its Indian policy. The Reagan administration has not, however, levelled similar cirticisms against Guatemala, Brazil, Chile or Paraguay.

Mr. Berkey criticized United States Indian policy for its discriminatory denial of Indian property rights, citing two examples. A bill before Congress entitled the "Ancient Indian Land Claims Settlement Act" would retroactively extinguish Indian title to vast areas of land in New York and South Carolina. Another example of United States policy which has grossly violated the rights of the Sioux Nation is the refusal of United States courts to adjudicate the Oglala Sioux Nation's claim of ownership to the Black Hills.

For further information, contact Robert T. Coulter or Joseph W. Ryan at (202) 547-2800 or write The Indian Law Resource Center, 601 E St. S.E., Wash., D.C. 20003.

REVOLUTIONARY CONTRADICTIONS:

MISKITOS AND SANDINISTAS IN NICARAGUA

"The aspirations of the indigenous population of America, traditionally exploited, oppressed and subjected to the rigors of a brutal internal colonialist system, are now aspirations contained within the Sandinista Revolution: aspirations which must not be betrayed."

Declaration of Principles of the Sandinista Popular Revolution With Regard to the Indigenous Communities of the Atlantic Coast. (August 1981)

"The 'TASBA PRI' Program is not new nor improvised. It has as its immediate antecedent a feasibility study conducted by the Revolutionary Government through the Nicaraguan Institute for the Atlantic Coast (INNICA) in November 1980 for the purpose of improving and dignifying the living conditions of the Miskitos that inhabit the Nicaraguan shore of the Coco River."

tasba pri/freeland/tierra libre (March 1982)

Nicaragua is a tiny impoverished Central American country of 2.5 million people. It is a land which has been devastated by a recent civil war following forty-five years of exploitation by the Samoza family, its allies, and North American transnational corporations. Large areas of the country lie in ruins in the aftermath of fighting which left tens of thousands dead and many more injured. For obvious reasons, the scars on the landscape and on the fabric of Nicaraguan society have not had time to heal.

The Nicaraguan Revolution brought the Sandinistas to power in 1979. The Sandinistas, for the most part, are young men and women who led an armed struggle against one of the most brutal regimes in the Americas. They are people who have good reason to fear the "North American Shark" because the U.S. government has tried to destabilize every reformist or revolutionary government in the recent history of Central America. Most of the Sandinistas are people who have struggled, suffered, and bled during the revolution which drove Samoza from power, and they are understandably determined to maintain the revolution for which their people paid so dearly.

Knowing the commitment of the Sandinistas to build a new and just society, it saddened us to receive news that there was a growing rift between them and the 100,000 Miskito Indians who live along the country's Atlantic Coast. It saddened us even more to hear that Sandinista soldiers had relocated large numbers of Miskito from their homeland along the Coco River in January, and that Ronald Reagan, Alexander Haig, Jeane Kirkpatrick, Jesse Helms and a number of right-wing "human rights" groups were using the events surrounding the Miskito relocation to condemn the Nicaraguan government for its policies toward indigenous peoples.

Although many of the facts concerning the Miskito relocation are uncertain, some things are known . On 13 January, 1982, helicopters carrying Nicaraguan military personnel descended upon Miskito villages on the southern bank of the Coco River along the Honduran frontier. Within a week, the soldiers had evacuated twenty villages, burned all the houses, killed the Indians' livestock and destroyed their fruit orchards. The government also arrested nearly one hundred Miskitos and set up five relocation camps some sixty kilometers from the Honduran border. Currently there are an estimated 10,000 Miskitos in these camps.

The Nicaraguan government emphatically denies that there was a massacre of Indians along the Rio Coco in January. It says that only two people died during the relocation — one of a heart attack and the other from hepatitis — and that it was absolutely necessary to move the villagers in order to protect them from attacks by counter-revolutionary bands on the other side of the river. According to the government, the relocation was precipitated by bloody terrorist raids by former Somocista guardsmen and dissident Indians last November in which 60 people were killed, including members of the Sandinista Army and local Miskito residents. While the relocation of the Miskito was a painful decision, the account continues, it was necessary for their safety, and the Sandinistas are now doing everything in their power to provide assistance to the people in the camps.

In February the U.S. State Department presented a very different interpretation of events. According to their version, the uprooting and relocation of the Miskito must b seen within the broader context of a military buildup now taking place in Nicaragua. Using aereal photographs and agents' reports, the State Department and the Central Intelligence Agency argued that the Sandinista government is fast becoming a "client state" of Cuba and the Soviet Union and that it is preparing to use its national soil to launch a "Marxist takeover" of Central America. In the State Department scenario, the expansion of anairfield at Puerto Cabezas is supposedly meant to accommodate MIG fighter planes, and the angry Miskito are the only obstacle in the way of the Marxists' geopolitical designs. For this reason, according to State Department propaganda, the Sandinista Army massacred Miskito villagers, bombed their churches, killed an undetermined but large number of people, and relocated the remaining survivors to roughly built and unhealthy "concentration camps."

Only an impartial investigation, in which the Miskito relocatees are interviewed in their own language, can establish what happened in Nicaragua at the beginning of this year, but there are reasons to be skeptical of both the U.S. State Department's and the Nicaraguan government's accounts. The State Department's version can be seen as pure propaganda. The U.S. government's interest in the "human rights" of the Miskito came at the same time as several American journalists revealed that the Reagan Administration has a $19 million "slush fund" to promote covert actions against the Nicaraguan government. The State Department is very selective about which government it does or does not accuse of human rights violations against indigenous populations. It has never, for example, protested the well-documented genocidal practices against Indian peoples of the governments of Paraguay, Guatemala, and Brazil.

The U.S. government is hardly a disinterested party when it comes to relocating indigenous poeples or using their lands for military ventures. At this very moment the U.S. Department of the Interior is busily removing 8,000 to 10,000 Navajo and Hopi Indians from their homes in the so-called "Joint Use Area" of the American Southwest. Recently the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency "bugged" meetings of Native leaders in Micronesia in order to insure a U.S. nuclear presence in that part of the Pacific. Why should anyone accept the U.S government's charges as anything but cynical when it systematically violates the rights of indigenous peoples within its own jurisdiction and borders?

The Nicaraguan government has also presented their dispute with the Miskito Indians within the context of what they perceive to be the threats to their revolution from Washington. There can be no question that, independent of the geopolitical ambitions of both Washington and Moscow, there rages a conflict between the Sandinistas and the Miskitos which has a history of its own. The events along the Rio Coco in January and February of this year are the tragic outcome of

a series of bitter conflicts and misunderstandings between the leadership of the Miskito people and the Sandinista government. An understanding of the nature of these conflicts may not only determine what happens along the Atlantic Coast in the future but also what role Indian peoples will or will not play in other revolutionary struggles throughout Central and South America in the years ahead.

The Forging of Miskito Nationhood

The Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua is unlike any other region within Central America. Geographically, it makes up more than half of the land area of the country and is comprised of a rugged tropical rainforest, riverline, and ocean-littoral environment. Ethnically, it is made up of Miskito, Sumo and Rama Indians, Afro-Caribbean Criollos, and Spanish-speaking Mestizos. Politically, it was not incorporated into Nicaragua until 1894, following more than two centuries of English control.

The Miskito Indians are not only the dominant ethnic group along the coast, but they have also been the determinative force in its history. Unlike other Mesoamerican indigenous groups, the Miskito successfully fought off Spanish rule, maintaining sovereignty over their aboriginal homeland without succumbing to European diseases, enslavement, and degeneration. Throughout the 17th century, as English pirates established a foothold in the Caribbean, the Miskito formed commercial and political alliances with the British in order to insure their own survival. In 1687, an Indian king was crowned in Jamaica to rule over "La Moskitia," and, in the course of the next two centuries, fifteen more Miskito monarchs were recognized by the British Crown.

In the course of the 19th century, many of the Miskito were converted to the Protestant Moravian religion. Fundamental political and economic changes, however, did not occur until the later part of the century, as the U.S. and England jockeyed for imperial hegemony over the strategic southern part of Central America and as the newly independent Nicaraguan state searched for a way of gaining administrative control over the Atlantic Coast. The key event occurred in 1894 when the Liberal government of Jose Santos Zelaya militarily invaded the headquarters of the Miskito reserve in Bluefields and announced the "Reincorporation of the Moskitia."

Things changed rapidly for the Miskito and the other Indians of the Atlantic Coast following the creation of the Department of Zelaya. Not only was the political sovereignty of the Miskito undermined, but the aboriginal lands of the Indians were invaded by large foreign — mainly "Yankee" — mining, timber, and banana companies. By the turn of the century, the Miskito and their neighbors were forced to subsist from hunting, fishing, and gardening while knowing that their fate now dependec upon the boom-and-bust cycles of a highly parasitric form of extractive capitalism.

As with other Nicaraguans, the real parasites for the Miskitos turned out to be the Samoza family and its cronies. Following World War II, the Samoza government granted the U.S. Nicaraguan Longleaf Pine Lumber Company (NIPCO) a huge timber concession in the far northeastern part of the country. The amount of forest denuded by this company was immense, and numerous Indians were removed from their traditional lands. When NIPCO departed in 1966, Samoza thought of another scheme to revive the forest industry, this time coordinated by the newly created Institute for National Development (INFONAC) and by the U.N. Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO). Again, the Miskito felt threatened, as Somoza announced the "nationalization" of their lands and they came to realize that they would not have a voice in the state's development plans.

It was in this context that a novel cultural and political revitalization movement emerged among the Indians of the Atlantic Coast. In the early 1970s, a group of Miskito and Sumo youths formed an organization called *Alpromiso* to defend the land and cultural rights of their people against the policies of the Somoza government. Although many of the founders of *Alpromiso* were wise to city ways, they immediately formed committees in isolated villages, began to study their people's history and traditions, and started to organize Elders' Councils in all the villages to provide advice and direction for their work.

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In September 1977, representatives of *Alpromiso* attended the historic United Nations NGO Conference on Discrimination Against Indigenous Peoples of the Americas held in Geneva, Switzerland. The Geneva Conference was important because it provided an opportunity for political and cultural exchanges between Indian leaders from North, South and Central America. When the conference ended, a declaraion was released calling for the recognition of indigenous peoples as nations, with rights to aboriginal territories and powers to form treaties and other agreements with nation-states.

The Coming of the Sandinistas

The Sandinistas argue that one of the reasons for the growing friction between themselves and some of the Miskito leadership was because the peoples of the Atlantic Coast did not participate in the revolutionary war. According to their position, "a relatively backward political consciousness" exists among the entire *Costeno* population — Indians, Blacks, and Mestizos — because they did not assume an active role in the revolutionary struggle. The Miskito leadership, on the other hand, argue that they were involved in a "parallel struggle" on the Atlantic Coast, but one which enabled them to rediscover their cultural roots and reaffirm their rights and needs as a distinct people vis-a-vis the policies of the Nicaraguan state.

This clash of worldviews became clear just months after the revolution when Comandante Daniel Ortega, the coordinator of the government junta, visited the Atlantic Coast. The junta's original idea had been to discourage an independent Indian organization on the Atlantic Coast and to promote the affiliaton of local Indian communities with mass organizations such as the Association of Rural Workers (ATC) and the Sandinista Defense Committee (CDS). The *Alpromiso* leadership protested this idea arguing that there was a need for an independent Indian organization to represent their people within the revolution. After much discussion, it was finally agreed that a general assembly of Native community leaders be held and that the question be opened to popular debate. In Noember 1979, a meeting of 700 Native leaders representing 112 communities was held at which it was agreed to form a new Indian organization to represent the special interests of Native peoples. It was out of this meeting that *Misurasata* — a term which means Miskito, Sumo, Rama, Sandinista "working together" — was formed. Steadman Fagoth, a dynamic leader with a large Native following along the coast, was chosen as the first General Coordinator of the new organization.

During the first year following the revolution, relations were relatively good between *Misurasata* and the government. The junta permitted *Misurasata* a representative on the newly formed Council of State in Managua. Under pressure from the Indian leadership, it also agreed to conduct the literacy campaign on the Atlantic Coast in Native languages rather than in Spanish. Many of the teachers who went into the isolated jungle and riverline communities as part of the literacy campaign were members of youth groups established by *Misurasata*.

The shaky alliance between the Miskito and the Sandinistas began to come apart in the spring and summer of 1980 when the government announced plans for the implementation of its agrarian reform program along the Atlantic Coast. Most of the limited analysis of the Nicaraguan reform to date has focused on its implementation in the more populous Pacific part of the country where it has been justifiably praised as being highly flexible, noncentralized, and quite adaptive to peasant customs and wishes. When the government turned its attention to the Atlantic Coast, however, it seemed to take a different stance. All planning and decision-making was centralized in a new agency called the Nicaraguan Institute for the Atlantic Coast (INNICA). Agrarian reform workers promoted new agricultural production strategies in Native communities which for centuries had survived off combined hunting, fishing, and gardening activities. Economists envisioned new agro-forestry and commercial fishing schemes as a way of resolving the government's pressing foreign exchange problems. Similar to so many other countries which have tropical rainforests and Native populations on their frontiers, the Nicaraguan agrarian reform called for the "integration" of the people and resources of the Atlantic Coast into the national economy.

The *Misurasata* leadership was not opposed to the idea of the government providing agricultural and other services to the Native communities of the Coast, but it was concerned that the regional development program would proceed in such a fashion that due recognition would not be given to aboriginal land claims. Since the reincorporation of "La

"The purpose of this project is not so much to protect these people from violence along the frontier as it is to establish the conditions for their social and economic integration into the Nicaraguan economy."

Moskitia," there has been a very vague and often conflicting land-title situation in the Department of Zelaya. From the Indians' perspective, it is still an open question just how much of the Department belongs to them, and what percentage can without compensation be legitimately claimed by the government.

In August 1980, the Nicaraguan Institute of Ecology and Natural Resources (IRENA) announced plans for the creation of a forest reserve in an area of northern Zelaya called Bosawas. While the project was conceived with the intent of benefitting indigenous communities and protecting the environment, Sumo and Miskito Indians living within the boundaries of the reserve and *Misurasata* leaders protested the project. From their point of view, the Bosawas project marked the beginning of an attempt on the part of the government to "nationalize" the resources of the Atlantic Coast.

It was at this time that *Misurasata* petitioned the Council of State to let it conduct a study of land titles possessed by Native communities along the Atlantic Coast. According to an agreement made with the government, *Misurasata* would be given four months to gather legal, archival, and other evidence to support the territorial claims of Indian communities on the coast. This study was then to be presented to the Nicaraguan Agrarian Reform Institute (INRA) in order to determine which lands belonged to Indian communities and the nature and extent of Indian rights to natural resources.

The results of the *Misurasata* land study are one of the biggest mysteries in the Miskito story. The study was financed in part by Cultural Survival, Inc., an indigenous rights organization in Cambridge, Massachusetts. As we shall see, the *Misurasata* leadership ws thrown in jail before the study was made public. In July 1981, some *Misurasata* leaders who remained in Nicaragua released a document which contained a map showing 45,407 square kilometers of the Atlantic Coast as Indian Territory. [One writer, speaking for the Nicaraguan Center for the Investigation and Documentation of the Atlantic Coast (CIDCA), has pointed out that this land claim would be for 38 percent of Nicaragua's territory. It should benoted, however, that there is nothing odd about aboriginal land claims of this type. Witness, for example, the Dene Nation's land claim to the Northwest Territory in Canada, or the Lakota Nation's land claim to the Black Hills in South Dakota. Aboriginal land claims are not an attempt to take somethng from someone else; they are an attempt to establish an historic and legal title as a point of negotiation between indigenous peoples and nation-states.]

Meanwhile, as all these events were taking place in Nicaragua, a number of other events were occurring in the United States which were to have an important effect on the future relations between the Miskitos and the Sandinistas. By the summer of 1980 there was already a large amount of sentiment building up in the U.S. Congress to cut off aid to the Nicaraguan regime. At the same time, the first reports began to appear in North American newspapers about ex-Somocista guardsmen training for an invasion in camps in Florida. In October 1980, a month before Ronald Reagan's election, a right-wing think-tank called the Heritage Foundation published a document titled "The Marxist Threat in Central America," calling for the destabilization of the Sandinista regime.

The Suppression of Misurasata

In February 1981, war broke out between *Misurasata* and Sandinista security agents. In a one week period, 33 *Misurasata* leaders were arrested, and four Indians and four soldiers were killed when government troops entered a crowded Moravian church in the town of Prinzapolka. The government claimed that these actions were necessary because the Indian leaders were calling for a separate and autonomous nation on the Atlantic Coast. According to the government, the main force behind the Indian separatist movement was Steadman Fagoth, the first general coordinator of *Misurasata* and the organizaton's representative on the Council of State. Documents possessed by the government allegedly showed that Fagoth was a spy under Somoza and that he and other *Misurasata* leaders were conducting counter-revolutionary activities against the Nicaraguan state under a scheme called "Plan '81."

The Sandinistas underestimated the following that the *Misurasata* leaders possessed on the Atlantic Coast. In the aftermath of the February jailings, thousands of Indians staged a sit-in in the northern towns of Huaspan and Bilswakarma calling for the release of their leaders. The government responded by sending a commission to restore order on the coast, and most of the *Misurasata* leaders, with the exception of Steadman Fagoth, were set free in early March. Fagoth negotiated his own release by promising to accept a scholarship to study in the Soviet Union. He returned to the Atlantic Coast in May and then fled into Honduras with 3,000 Miskito followers. By June 1981, Steadman Fagoth wa reported to be visiting the United States where, according to one American journalist, he was "working with some of Miami's best-known Nicaraguan exiles, including several seeking to overthrow the Sandinista regime."

By this time the Sandinistas began to realize that they needed to create some sort of Indian policy in order to control events on the Atlantic Coast. On 12 August 1981, Comandante Daniel Ortega read a "Declaration of Principles of the Sandinista Popular Revolution With Regard to the Indigenous Communities of the Atlantic Coast" before a meeting of 500 government workers and supporters gathered in a Managua suburb. Despite the revolutionary rhetoric with which the document opens, the 8-paragraph declaration is striking for its misreading of the unique cultural, historical and political reality that exists on the Atlantic Coast.

The first principle of the Declaration states that "Nicaragua is but one nation" which cannot be "territorially and politically dismembered, divided, or deprived of its sovereignty and independence" and whose "official language is Spanish." There are then three general paragraphs about the government's support of racial and religious equality, freedom of cultural and linguistic expression, and the popular participation of indigenous communities in the revolution. The real heart of the Declaration, however, is in paragraphs 5 and 6 which address the vital question of Native land and resource rights. Paragraph 5 says that the "Sandinista Popular Revolution" will guarantee and legalize through the granting of titles to lands where coastal communities have traditionally lived, while paragraph 6 states that all natural resources are the property of the Nicaraguan people represented by the "Revolutionary State." In the case of forest resources, Indian communities are recognized as having rights to receive a portion of the benefits derived from their exploitation, but the actual right of exploitation rests with the Nicaraguan government. (Interestingly, the official English translation of the August 1981 Sandinista Indian Declaration, which was distributed in Geneva, confuses the meaning of the original Spanish document released by the government. The Spanish phrase *"las tierras donde historicamente han vivido las communidades de la Coasta Atlantica"* in paragraph 5 is translated as "the land on which the peoples of the Atlantic Coast have traditionally *lived and worked"* [emphasis ours]. The distinction here between Indian property rights to village sites where people live versus more encompassing rights to hunting, fishing, gathering and gardening territories where people work is a critical one. As the Spanish version of the August 1981 Sandinista Indian Declaration reads, it is no more far-reaching in its recognition of aboriginal land rights than the 1971 Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act inthe United States or the 1973 Indian Statute in Brazil.)

For obvious reasons, when this Declaration was presented to a gathering of indigenous leaders meeting at a second UN NGO conference in Geneva in September 1981, many of them thought it was just a philosophical-justification for a "land grab" on the part of the Nicaraguan government.

The final months of 1981 saw an even greater deterioration in the relations between the Miskito and the Sandinistas, as well as a general threat to the security of the entire northern part of the country. In September, Brooklyn Rivera — one of the last of the original *Misurasata* leaders who remained in Nicaragua and who favored negotiations with the government — joined his Miskito compatriots in Honduras. Meanwhile, news reports began to filter abroad about a general buildup of the Honduran Armed Forces, about ex-Somocista guardsmen ammassing along the Nicaraguan-Honduran frontier, and about a U.S.-backed inter-American security force being trained in Argentina for deployment in Cen-

tral America. In November and December, a number of virulent claims and counter-claims passed between the Nicaraguan and Honduran governments about border incursions. The anger of the Nicaraguans was particularly fired when it was revealed that the Miskito leader Steadman Fagoth was one of those injured in an Honduran Army C-47 crash at Puerto Lempira in late December.

As mentioned previously, the relocation of the 10,000 Miskito Indians that took place in January generated so much propaganda from the U.S. government that it is currently impossible to separate fact from fiction. In March 1982, however, the Office of Press and Public Relations of the Nicaraguan government released a document entitled TASHA PRI which provides a great deal of insight into what went wrong between the Sandinistas and the Miskito. Ostensibly, the government document is meant to counter U.S government accusations by showing that the relocation of the Miskito along the Coco River was necessary to protect them from attacks by counter-revolutionary bands. The document also cites the statements of foreign visitors (among them Representative Tom Harkin of the U.S. Congress and Former Costa Rican President Jose Figueres) and national church leaders to show that the Miskito are well cared for and not exploited in the five resettlement camps. There is something about this document which forces one to wonder whether what has happened on the Atlantic Coast is less a set of unfortunate blunders by a young and relatively inexperienced government than it is a coherent plan for the eventual forced assimilation of the Miskitó population.

"Tasba Pri" is the Miskito term for "Free Land" and the name the Nicaraguan government has given to an "Integral Rural Resettlement Program" for the resettled Miskito communities on the Coco River. According to the document describing this resettlement program, a feasibility study for the resettlement of the Coco River people was conducted by the Nicaraguan Institute for the Atlantic Coast (INNICA) as far back as November 1980. The purpose of this project is not so much to protect these people from violence along the frontier as it is to establish the conditions for their social and economic integration into the Nicaraguan economy. The government has already invested several million *cordobas* in the planting of subsistence and commercial crops and it has established production quotas for the coming year. Although the government is proud of the social, health, and technical services that it has programmed for these communities, it seems to be setting the institutional framework for a type of dependency not unlike that known on Indian reservations in the United States. The irony is that all this is being done in the name of "revolutionary socialism" and apparently with very little input, except labor, on the part of the Indian people involved.

It is equally disturbing to see the new racial and cultural mythology that the Sandinistas are creating to rationalize their policies along the Atlantic Coast. At the beginning of the *Tasba Pri* document, there is a section describing the "racial and ethnic origins of Nicaraguan Nationhood." Although the document recognizes the ethnic pluralism of Nicaraguan society, it states "it is national policy to recover and defend pride in the Mestizo origins of the Nicaraguan people." The history of inter-ethnic relations in Nicaragua, according to this document, is filled with contradictions. The Miskito themselves are said not to be an autochthonous people but rather the product of a union between an African population and a Sumo group that occurred relatively late in the colonial era. During the colonial period, it continues, the Miskito served as mercenaries for the British imperialists, defending them in their war against Spain, and plundering other Native groups along the coast. Later, when U.S. imperialism penetrated the Atlantic Coast, the Miskito internalized "North American culture" and continued to see themselves as opposed to their Mestizo class allies on the Pacific Coast. It was only with Sandino's dream to create a set of large-scale cooperateives along the Coco River that the indigenous and Mestizo populations began to see their struggle for national sovereignty as a common one. Unfortunately, the Miskito and other indigenous groups were left behind in this struggle, and it was only with the victory of the Sandinista National Liberation Front in July 1979 that the "uneven development of political consciousness" between Indians and Mestizos could be finally overcome.

While this makes good revolutionary ideology, it does little justice to the historical traditions and cultural aspirations of the indigenous peoples. It is surprising, in fact, how little respect this Marxist theory of Nicaraguan ethnic history shows for Indian oral traditions, and how minimal a role it gives to indigenous peoples in determining their own destiny and fate.

Hemispheric Implications

The whole Miskito affair is taking on the appearance of a very tragic and unnecessary chapter in the history of an otherwise valiant people who have fought against tremendous odds to win their freedom from an oppressive and dictatorial regime. The Indians and their supporters are certain to become increasingly articulate in their assertion that under the Nicaraguan brand of socialism, Indian people have no rights as Indians. They will compare the internment of their people to the forced relocation of Japanese-Americans during World War II, to the March of Tears of the Cherokees, and to other atrocities, and their words will be heard by North American and European progressive groups to the detriment of the Nicaraguan Revolution. More importantly, the issue will force a wedge between the other Indians of Central and South America and liberation forces in those countries, and it will be exploited by the Right, especially in these countries with huge Indian populations. Social change cannot come to many areas of Latin America unless the Indian joins the struggle, and the Right is certain to exploit the Nicaraguan experience in their efforts to neutralize any Indian politicization.

Apologists for the Nicaraguan government assert that because Nicaragua is an anti-imperialist state, progressive people must uncritically support that government on every issue. Their argument parallels other arguments favoring political expediency in questions involving peoples' fundamental rights and which result in policies which find the U.S.S.R. supporting Argentina and the U.S. upholding totalitarian regimes in Guatemala, the Phillippines and elsewhere. "They may be tyrants," the argument goes, "but they're our tyrants." Some apologists carry that line of thinking to extremes, accusing anyone who is critical of Nicaragua's Indian policy of being "manipulated" by the Right much the same

way that McCarthyists in the U.S. once accused anyone who was even slightly critical of U.S. policy of being a "pinko." The problem with this approach is that it does not speak to the real problems faced by an Indian people. It creates contradictions which finds the Sandinista government in the process of dismantling communal Indian communities and offering to individual Miskitos private ownership of parcels of land as part of a strategy intended to lure Miskito people into the Nicaraguan socialist economy.

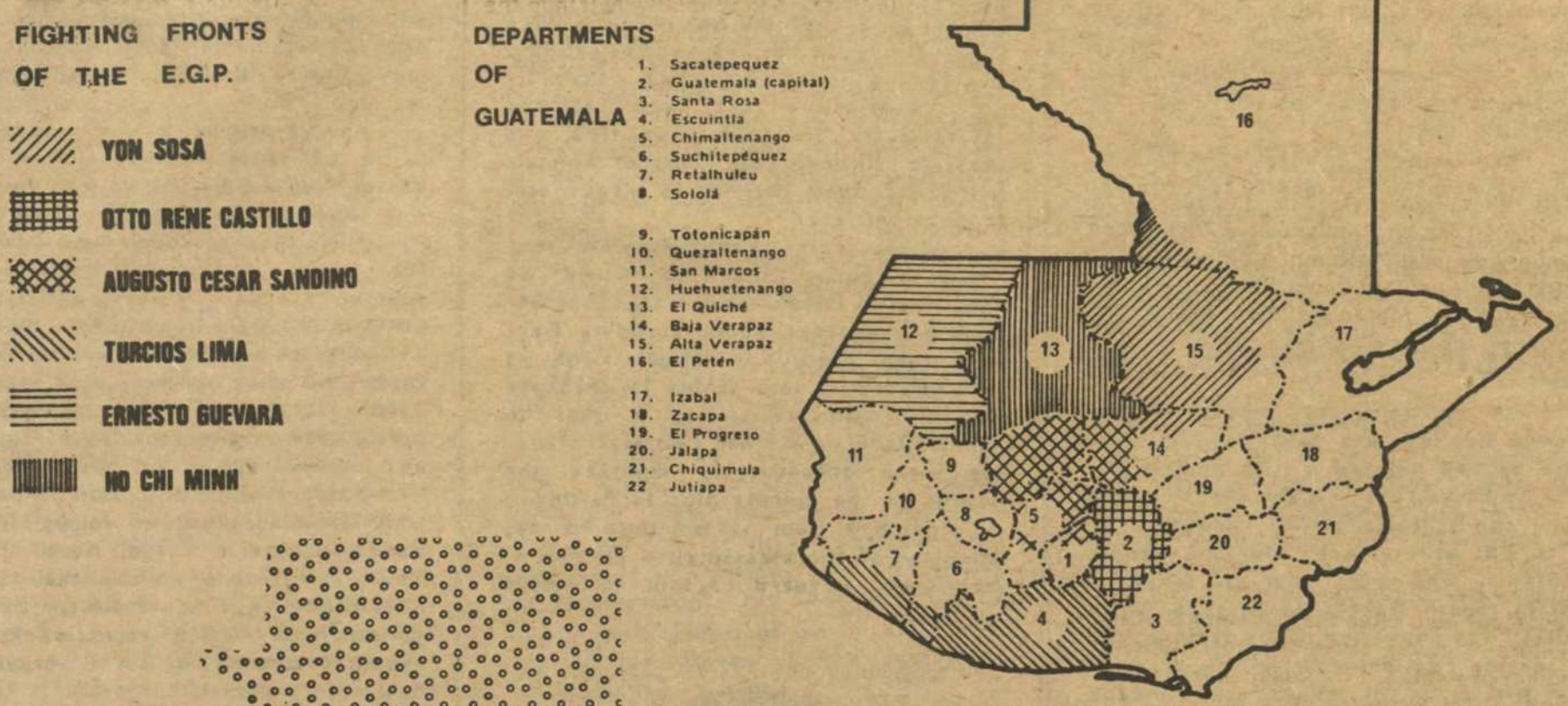
The Indian situation is desperate in Central America. Last November, and again in early March, thousands of Guatemalan soldiers swept through the highlands in a burnt-earth maneuver, conducting massacres and forcing people to flee their villages. There are reports that twenty to fifty thousand Mayan Indian refugees are now occupying camps in Mexico and the death toll is expected to grow alarmingly in the coming weeks as the new military junta of the rich reaches out for arms to the U.S. government in order to slaughter the legions of the poor.

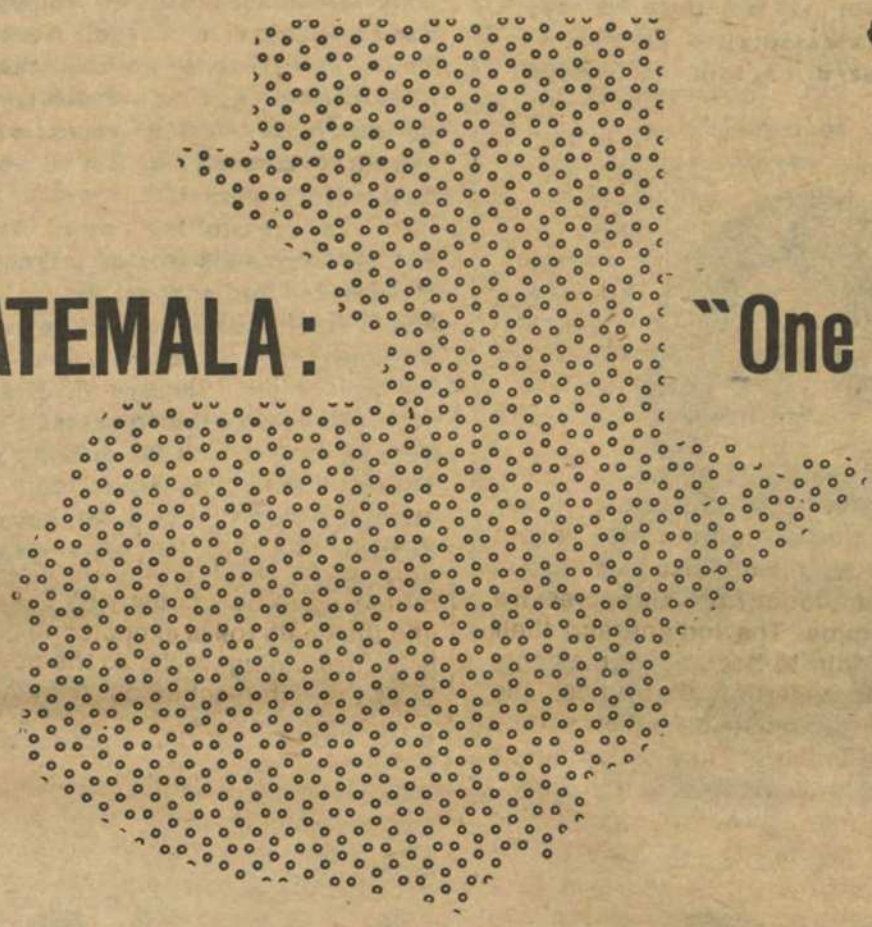
What is significant about Nicaragua is that the government there claims to be the protectors of the poor. And yet, the poorest sector of that country suffers what can only be described as extreme repression. The Left in that war-torn country appears to be suffering a crisis in ideology which will not permit it to negotiate with a community of Indians over such issues as local autonomy, self-determination, and a shared decision-making process on the exploitation of natural resources. It all appears so tragic and unnecessary.

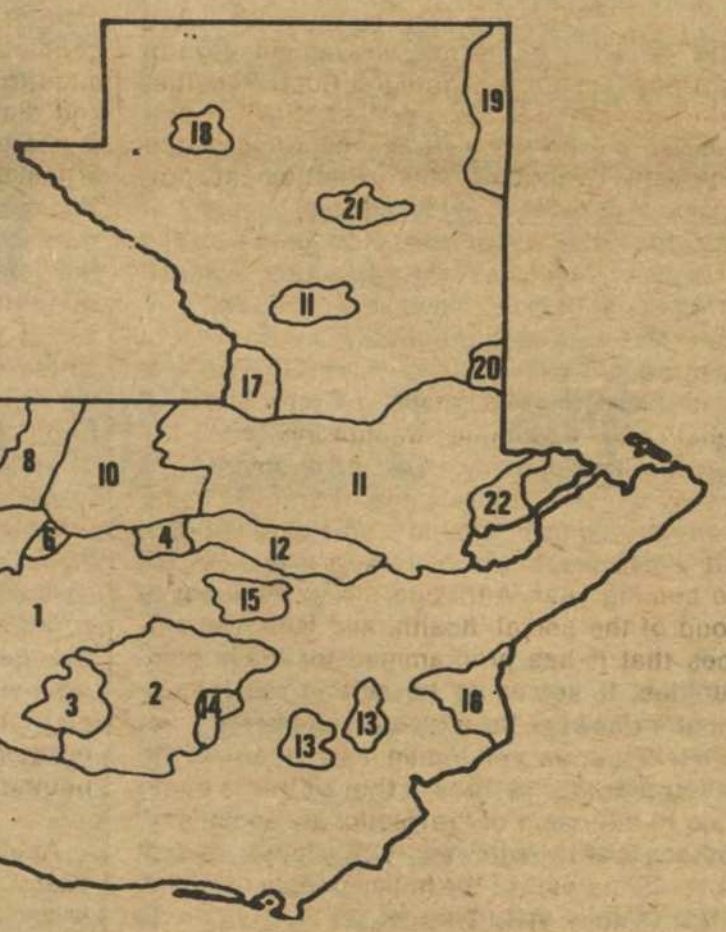
The big winner in this chess game is the U.S. State Department which would love to witness Afghans shot down by Soviet troops and Indians falling to Sandinista guns not because it loves Afghans or Indians or because it has any respect for peoples' human rights, but because it likes to see its ideological enemies harrassed by anyone who is inclined or motivated to do so. The Miskito Indians in Honduras are daily more easily convinced they have no other choice but to fight back, that the Managua government will not hear their grievances or respond to their assertions that they wish to remain a distinct people with control over their lives. It is a truly tragic situation, and one with ramifications for progressive people throughout the world.

John Mohawk
Shelton H. Davis

GUATEMALA: "One Struggle; Many Fronts"







The news out of Guatemala continues to depict a country deeply at war. Almost by the week now, we recieve information on assasinations, disappearances and large scale massacres conducted by the Guatemalan military.

The reports come in the form of communiques from guerrilla groups, letters from friends about the particular conditions faced in their villages and the increasing ammount of information that the Guatemala support network in North America constantly circulates.

One recent source of information is the magazine, COMPANERO,put out by the Guerrilla Army of the Poor as their international organ. The Guerrilla Army of the Poor (Ejercito Guerrillero de los Pobres - E.G.P.) is one of several major revolutionary organizations united in the struggle for the liberation of the Guatemalan people. The map depicted here is circulated by them.

We consider that this map, if accurate, is of special interest as a source of information on the strength and extension of the resistance movement in Guatemala. The general location of 22 Native Nations in Guatemala can also be found in it.

Leonard Peltier made a court appearance in Los Angeles on January 12. The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals overturned his convictions for prison escape and possession of a weapon, and remanded his case to the trial court for additional hearings.

The hearing, on January 12 dealt with the testimony of FBI special agent James Wilkins. Wilkins was present when Peltier was captured five days after his escape from the U.S. prison at Lompoc, California in July of 1979. Wilkins was the custodian of the government's evidence during the subsequent escape trial.

The extraordinary aspect of the recent hearing was Wilkin's admission that he had pointed a rifle in Peltier's face and asked him, "Is this the last thing Coler and Williams saw?" The reference is to FBI agents Jack Coler and Ronald Williams, who were shot to death at Oglala, South Dakota on June 26, 1975. Peltier was convicted in the killings, and is serving two consecutive life terms.

Wilkins, in the original prison escape trial in Los Angeles in 1979, had made no mention of Coler and Williams. The defense camp sought to prove that James Wilkins' testimony was prejudiced on the basis of his friendship with the slain FBI agent, Ronald Williams. Williams and Wilkins had worked together in Los Angeles.

Peltier's recollection of the incident was somewhat different. He stated that Wilkins put the rifle barrel in his face and told him, "You're the punk that murdered Coler and Williams. I'm going to blow your .... head off." Peltier stated that a sheriff's deputy named Turner, who was at the scene of the arrest, told the FBI agent, "I don't want to be part of a murder." Turner did not recall making this comment at the Los Angeles hearing.

Peltier's attorney Bruce Ellison is now confident that the hearing substantiates the defense position, and that the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals will affirm their decision to grant a new trial to Peltier.

At the center of the prison escape is Peltier's belief that he would be assassinated inside the prison. Another Federal inmate, Robert Standing Deer Wilson, has deposed in affidavits that he was offered various favors in exchange for his participation in a plot to "neutralize" or murder Peltier. Standing Deer subsequently divulged the details of the murder plot to Peltier.

Standing Deer stated that he was informed of the assassination plot by R. M. Carey, a guard captain at Marion prison in southern Illinois. Also at the meeting was a "well-dressed stranger," who the defense camp believes is an FBI agent. Standing Deer was recently moved back into the U.S. prison at Marion.

Photo Credit: Banno

At the original prison escape trial, Judge Lawrence Lydick, a former law partner of Richard Nixon, who appointed him to the Federal bench, refused the use of a "coercion defense," so evidence of the murder plot, and testimony to substantiate Standng Deer's position were not allowed. During Peltier's testimony at the prison escape trial, Judge Lydick so restricted what the jury could hear, that Peltier declared that he would not participate in the courtroom "railroad" and walked off the witness stand.

Attorney Ellison is also preparing a writ of habeas corpus to be filed in Federal court in Fargo, North Dakota. The writ deals with the murder convictions against Peltier. Evidence culled from 12,000 pages of Peltier's recently released FBI file will provide the basis for the writ.

The possibility now exists that Peltier may walk out of prison this year. If motions for new trials are granted in Los Angeles and Fargo, Peltier will be eligible for bail for the first time since his arrest on February 6, 1976.

The following interview was conducted at the U.S. prison at Marion, Illinois on December 10, 1981, by Mordecai Specktor, a Minnesota writer. Peltier looked fit and healthy, and responded earnestly to all the questions.

Also present at the interview was photographer, Richard Bancroft, long-time friend of the Native Movement.

In The Spirit Of Crazy Horse, Leonard Peltier

By Mordecai Specktor

INTERVIEW WITH LEONARD PELTIER
U.S. PENITENTIARY AT MARION, ILLINOIS
DECEMBER 10, 1981

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AKWESASNE NOTES: You are in Marion prison because you were convicted in the shooting deaths of two FBI agents at Oglala, South Dakota in 1975.

Amnesty International in London recently issued a report which examined FBI miscondct in your case. They found evidence that FBI agents coerced a witness, Myrtle Poor Bear, to sign incriminating affidavits. These statements by Poor Bear indicate that you had confessed to her that you shot the FBI agents.

LEONARD PELTIER: She signed three affidavits: The first affidavit she signed said that she hadn't been at the scene of the crime. The other two affidavits, which they sent to Canada to have me extradited, in one she states that she was an eyewitness; in another that I had told her about it, and in both affidavits she said that she was my girlfriend.

AN: When did you first see Myrtle Poor Bear?

LP: The first time I saw Myrtle Poor Bear was at my trial (in Fargo, North Dakota) when she walked into the courtroom. She had come to our side...

AN: That was a year after the shoot-out at Oglala?

LP: Yes, over a year later. It's a known fact that the affidavits were fabricated. Myrtle and I have never known each other. She's given some pretty heavy statements about how she was intimadated and coerced into signing these affidavits. She even said that they were using drugs on her, to calm her down, when she was all excited and attempted to escape from them at one time.

We're in the process right now of filing a Writ of Habeas Corpus.

One thing we should clear up, is that at the trial no one ever testified that they ever saw me shooting at anybody, let alone shooting anybody. They used a lot of circumstantial evidence. Like the murder weapon -- they used that and emphasized strongly that the murder weapon was mine. Now we've dis-

covered, actually we've know all along -- we've made these accusations before -- that the murder weapon is just not the murder weapon any more. The FBI has withheld the results of their own investigation.

AN: At the Fargo trial you were identified by an FBI agent who saw you from a great distance at Oglala. He was looking through the telescopic sight of a rifle?

LP: The evidence which they used against me was all fabricated. We have evidence now, we have a document proving this. We know that they knowingly put on perjured evidence, by this I mean the telescope evidence.

These FBI agets were supposedly looking through a telescope and saw me running from the scene of the crime. The FBI did their own investigation to see if it was possible to identify anybody with that, and their investigation proved negative, yet the prosecution put the original statement into the trial.

AN: You were indicted for the shooting of the FBI agents, as was Dino Butler and Bob Robideau, who were acquitted on the basis that they acted in self-defense. At the Butler-Robideau trial in Iowa, Wilford Draper, a 19 year old Navajo, testified that FBI agents in Arizona had him handcuffed and tied to a chair. He said that he was threatened by the agents, who wanted him to testify against you. They also offered him various favors in excange for his testimony.

LP: Draper and Norman Brown testified at my trial that they were coerced into committing perjury at the Grand Jury hearing.

AN: This becomes increasingly complicated -- we can't cover all aspects of your case in the hour we have now.

LP: Yeah, in the limited time we have. There are so many things; if you could see all that we have uncovered in the last couple years, your imagination would be....I don't know how to say it...

AN: It would strain your imagination?

LP: Yeah, it definitely would (laughter).

AN: If you believe that America stands for liberty and justice for all people...

LP: Everything you were taught about America is proven to be a big lie, that's all there is to it, in the example of my case.

AN: Another aspect of your case is that around the time of the shoot-out at Oglala on June 26, 1975, Dick Wilson, the former tribal chairman of the Pine Ridge reservation, signed away 1/8 of the reservation's land base, an area called the Sheep Mountain Bombing Range. This area is thought to contain valuable uranium deposits.

Prior to your sentencing in Fargo you told Judge Paul Benson: "Such a conviction (for the shooting deaths of the FBI agents) is an important part of the efforts to discredit those who are trying to alert their brothers and sisters to the new threat from the white man, and the attempt to destroy what little Indian land remains in the process of extracting our uranium, oil and other minerals."

In this sense you see yourself as a prisoner of the energy wars, or the continuing war against Indians.

LP: Yes, definitely. We know that a Congressman recently wrote a statement indicating that they are again trying to abrogate all the treaties. They're doing it in a sneaky way, you might say. We have a number of politicians, Republican politicians from Washington state and from around the country, who are pushing to abrogate all the treaties and terminate the reservations. This is a direct attack on our sovereignty, on our right to hold this land as natives of this country, of Turtle Island.

Once the reservations are terminated, we're going to have to pay taxes, and we don't have jobs. There have never been jobs on the reservations, therefore we couldn't pay our taxes and we would lose our lands. We see this as another kind of attack on our land.

AN: A number of months after the shoot-out at Oglala, you were arrested in northern Alberta and imprisoned in British Columbia. What were conditions like in Oakalla prison?

LP: I was in a isolated cell, with a blanket and sheets and a pillow. No light. At first it was total isolation, that's what it amounted to...it was inhuman. I never got any physical abuses, although I had been threatened a few times.

AN: What kind of threats?

LP: A number of things like, " You Indians have to understand that you lost the war, and it's over. Don't try and pursue it because all we'll do is come in and kick some ass. . . " like this, and naturally I just laugh at ignorance, talk like that, so that's what I did (laughter).

AN: Following the murder trial in Fargo you came directly to Marion?

LP: From Fargo I came straight to Marion.

AN: What was the situation at Marion? Did you go into the Control Unit?

LP: When I first got here I was sentenced by Captain Carey to the Control Unit. I had a hearing, everyone has a hearing, it's called an Inmate Discriplinary Committee, IDC. At this hearing the Captain told me that they were going to put me into H-Unit (the Control Unit), because I was convicted of killing police officers, and since they were police officers they were going to put me in what was called the Control Unit for an indefinite period. I stayed down "the hole" for two or three weeks.

AN: "The hole," what's that?

LP: That's I-Unit, isolation, cells with nothing in them, strip cells. There's a bunk in there and a toilet and a basin, and a light.

AN: When are you allowed out of the cell?

LP: If you're lucky you get out 1/2 hour a day, if you're not, it's a half hour every other day.

AN: Are these the boxcar cells?

LP: No, the boxcars are a little different, the're enclosed. The I-Unite cells, strip cells are enclosed but they've got a little plexiglass window.

AN: You were sentenced to the Control Unit?

LP: Right, at that time I was sentenced but it was all illegal; the sentence was illegal but it was their opportunity to keep me down the hole a little bit longer. Once the lawyers put in some protest about it, they released me into populaton.

I've never actually been in the H-Unit; I've been sentenced there twice. It's not really that much different from the hole; it's just a longer time period of isolation.

AN: Would you talk a little about how you became involved with the Indian Movement?

LP: I didn't get involved with the Indian Movement until the spring of 1971. Politically, I started getting involved when I was fifteen years old.

I think it was 1959 at the Turtle Mountain Chippewa Reservation at Belcourt, North Dakota -- my father's from there, my mother's from Fort Totten -- at that time, during Eisenhower's term in office he had made a statement that he was going to officially terminate all the reservations -- push the termination policy that had been created years ago. The reason he gave for that Indian people had fought in the war, and therefore were citizens; so they would abolish the reservations.

For quite awhile people that had relocated to cities returned from the ghettos in Minneapolis, Los Angeles, Seattle, Portland. People started re-

turning and refusing relocation, because all it was basically was a rip-off. And at that time, the BIA Superintendent, Mr. Rice, gave us a choice to either accept relocation or the commodities and other welfare assistance would be cut off.

That went on for about a year; we had a real difficult winter in 1959, and there were a lot of community meetings around the reservation and I started attending.

The first reason for attending was that at any kind of gathering we have a little feast - no matter how little it is, they put it together. One time I got to listening to what the people were talking about.

I heard a number of people, women crying, making grievances about their children starving at home. One lady, Cecelia Dakota, got up and made a very emotional statement asking where the warriors of the reservation were at - where the men were -- because here children were at home starving. That had a great effect on me at that time, for being fifteen years old.

AN: What was life like when you were young at Turtle Mountain? I read that you have thirteen brothers and sisters?

LP: Yeah, but let me explain this: My mother and father divorced when me and my two sisters were quite young, and remarried. Through this they've had new families; it amounts to where I have thirteen brothers and sisters, half-brothers and -sisters.

I want to explain this real clearly: Life on Turtle Mountain when I was growing up was a good life, in the sense that there was a lot of love and unity among the people, but the poverty was high. The only time that I really got a good hot meal was when I went to school and got the school lunch.

There were numerous cases on the reservation where children were becoming quite sick because of malnutrition. They were more susceptible to disease, and one little girl died because of poor medical treatment. People's health was real bad -- when you don't have an adequate diet that happens, as everybody knows.

There was a lot of poverty, life was hard, but it was good in the sense that we all stuck together. We were all one. My whole community was like that. There was never a time that I'd walk into the house and they would be eating and they would deny me something to eat. Might not have been much, but they would set me down a place, and sit me down. And that's what I mean by it was a good life, in that sense.

The information that I've been getting from back at home is that it's very rare to see that happening. People are more disunified, fighting each other now. All those government programs that were in there were changing their whole philosophy about sharing. They were adopting the American philosophy of keeping up with the Joneses, or I'm Number One, to hell with my neighbor. I think they adopted that attitude along with all the government programs.

Not a large number of people were involved in these programs. Unemployment has always stayed high on the reservations.

AN: You moved to Seattle and set up a car repair shop?

LP: I got that started with a guy named Howard Miller, a Chippewa Indian from Michigan. We started off as a private business -- we did quite well the first year, in fact, and were becoming successful small businessmen.

Then we started to sit around talking about helping people; we were more into helping people than in our own personal gain. We more or less started giving stuff away; free repairs for this woman on wefare -- we'd just charge her for the price of the parts, do the work for free. And that's where you can't run a business (laughter). After a while we just closed up because we went into debt.

AN: Quite a number of people you worked with in AIM have been killed. Anna Mae Aquash was murdered on the Pine Ridge reservation in February of 1976. An autopsy found that she had died of exposure, and she was buried as an unknown person.

LP: We have evidence now that David Price, one of the main FBI investigators, was present at the discovery of her body, and her name was mentioned.

AN: Yet she was buried as an unidentified person.

LP: Yes, right, also there was mention of possible foul play. Still, she was sent to a pathologist who ruled that she died of exposure, and was buried as Jane Doe, until later when her body was exhumed and identification was made, and the bullet was found (in her head).

AN: How did it happen that you went to Oglala?

LP: See, I've got some children there. I wasn't a stranger to Oglala.

AN: Your mother is from there?

LP: My mother is a Sioux, but she's from Fort Totten. I had been married to a girl from Pine Ridge, we have a couple children together.

How we got there? We were invited there by the traditional Chiefs, the Elders to come in there, because at that time they were really under great fear and stress of being attacked, and some of them were being attacked and beaten.

For one, Richard Little was beaten and thrown off at the driveway to the hospital; he later died from this beating, which no one was ever arrested and convicted for, because it was the "goons" that were involved in it.

AN: You went to Oglala to protect the people.

LP: Basically in that sense, yes, we went there to organize a defense . . show people how to defend themselves, their rights. We also went to learn more about the religion and spiritual part of it, the culture.

AN: You mentioned your children; do you see them?

LP: I haven't seen some of them since I've been here. There are four of them I haven't seen.

AN: For five years.

LP: Yes, five years now. The reason for that is it's too expensive, too far away from home to bring people down here. I just don't get to see them because of that reason.

AN: You were visited here this spring by Robert Redford. What was that visit about?

LP: There was a book and a film being written about my case, and he's going to direct the film, very possibly. He's putting in a proposal to Twentieth Century Fox, which has the film rights. He's going to direct it ... I hope (laughter) ... I think he will. He's interested -- he's been shown the evidence we have, and is pretty well informed about the case.

AN: Peter Matthiesen, a prominent author, is writing a book about you. How's that going?

LP: I work pretty closely with Peter on it. We're hoping to have the final draft out this month or January. Hopefully, we'll have it on sale this spring, but he's having problems.

We're uncovering such valuable evidence, the material for this book is piling up and piling up, and is already up to something like 800 pages. You know it's very hard to print a book that big, so he had some difficulties with that aspect, there's so much material.

AN: How do you feel about having become sort of a symbol for the Indian Movement, a symbol for Indians in prison?

LP: It's really difficult to explain what my feelings are. I mean, it's never been my intention to be anybody special, whatever you want to call it.

AN: You have support groups working on your behalf around the United States and in Europe. People are in touch with you, letting you know about their efforts...

LP: I get quite a little stack of mail every month. People have been really supportive, kind, generous. Mainly they've been concerned about the whole Indian struggle, the Indian cause, which is what I'm all about in the first place.

I think my case has had a great effect on the Indian movement. It's brought attention to just what Indian people are struggling for. It has made a lot of people aware, so in that sense I feel pretty good that my case has taken that direction, has been sucessful in exposing a lot of crimes done to my people. It's continuing today, you know, I'm not talking about just a hundred years ago.

AN: As I mentioned earlier, people involved in different aspects of your case have been killed, like Anna Mae Aquash..

LP: Michael Anderson (witness coerced by FBI agents to testify against Peltier at the Fargo murder trial).

AN: Joe Stuntz was shot to death at Oglala. Dallas Thundershield was killed during the prison escape from Lompoc.

LP: Roque Duenas (friend of Peltier, who was tried on charges of aiding in the prison escape).

AN: What have you heard about Roque Duenas?

LP: They haven't found his body yet. He was supposed to be on a boat fishing (in Washington state). His body hasn't been found yet; it's been about 90 days now since he turned up missing.

We have no idea what happened; we just don't know. We can't make any accusations until we've heard what really happened, and it looks like we might never know what happened.

AN: Are you afraid for your safety here at Marion?

LP: Sometimes there are occasions where I'm getting intimidated, harassed. It gives me cause to have some fear.

It's hard to say -- you have to understand how these people work before you can really describe the possibilities. It's so easy to be set up in the institution, it's amazing.

AN: What type of intimidation, harassment?

LP: Oh. . .things that they know really affect us, like our religion. We're being denied our religion, full rights to practice all our religion. We have the pipe here. . .we don't have drum ceremonies.

AN: When can you have a pipe ceremony?

LP: Today, in fact, right now we could be having one. Every Thursday from 2:30 to 3:30.

Oh, . . .there are a number of little incidents that keep me alert, when I know I'm being intimidated and harassed.

AN: What's your routine like at the prison; what do you do here on a normal day, if there's such a thing as a normal day here.?

LP: Nothing (Marion inmates have been on a work stoppage for the past year -- ED.) -- I write some letters, read a book, I get outside every other day, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday; for two hours on those days, and a hour Saturday, an hour Sunday.

The rest of time is spent in our unit. Cells are opened at 7:30. . . . (Interview ended.)

In Defense of Native Peoples

Throughout the American continents, Native Peoples are confronted almost daily with ominous threats to their continued existence as separate and distinct peoples of the world. All too frequently, governments and corporations who covet the remaining lands and resources of Native Peoples, seek to circumvent the Treaties which guarantee the rights of Native communities. The methods of accomplishing this theft of land, and subsequent cultural destruction, have not changed much over the years. Deceit, stealth, bribery, contrived imprisonment, assassination, mass-starvation, military invasion -- these are the tools which are used to accomplish the destruction of Native Culture. The history of Western Civilization is not a very pretty one in regards to the treatment accorded to the indigenous people of this hemisphere.

These days, the threats to Native Peoples are intensifying once again. Like the many threatened animal species, Native peoples are being decimated by the insatiable demands for Energy of an over-industrialized Western society. Many small (an some not so small) nations are desperately fighting for survival: for cultural, economic, social, and territorial integrity. The rights of Native communities are under constant attack.

It is against this background that the work of the Emergency Response International Network (E.R.I.N.), was initiated a few years ago by a group of Editors from AKWESASNE NOTES. E.R.I.N. was conceived as a way of mobilizing public opinion to defend the rights of threatened communities.

The past two years have seen a considerable expansion in the ability of the Emergency Response International Network to function effectively as a rapid-response, conflict-resolution system -- a system which stead-fastly defends the rights of the Native People involved. We have grown from a small group of dedicated individuals operating on a word-of-mouth basis into a effective and efficient network involving thousands of people. The public outcry we have been able to generate has made the crucial difference on several occasions. We can truthfully say, with a good feeling, that lives have been saved because of our members' participation -- that the rights of future generatins have been protected because our members cared enough to write a letter or make a phone call.

E.R.I.N. people are asked to become members by making $10 per year donation. This will allow us here to mail the Bulletin regularly on a monthly basis, and also to carry on the telephone and special printing work necessary during emergencies. There are also special fact-sheets, pamphlets and books which need printing and dissemination -- and which your E.R.I.N. membership will make possible.

For those who can afford to give more to this effort (and for organizations) we have other special designations. They are listed in the enclosed coupon.

Don't forget your contributions to E.R.I.N. can be tax-deductible if sent to E.R.I.N./Youth Project. Thank You!

E.R.I.N. c/o Akwesasne Notes
via Rooseveltown, NY 13683

SHORT NOTES

PAPAGOS TAKEOVER MEXICAN GOVERNMENT BUILDING

In early March about 75 Papago Indians took control of a Mexican government building Caborca, Sonora, Mexico (120 miles southwest of Tucson, AZ) and held it for more than eight days. It was a peaceful demonstration to draw attention to their need for land and social services.

In question was a 75,000 acre farm owned by former Tuscconian Robert Wood which he and his family have occupied since the 1930's. The Papago claim aboriginal ownership of the land. They are now asking the Mexican government to expropriate the land and lend them the money to buy back what is rightfully theirs.

University of Arizona field historian Bernard Fontana admits "there is no question that the land was theirs," noting that the Gadsden Purchase of 1853 "divided the Papago territory almost precisely in half." A large number of Papago live in Arizona.

"The problem is that the Papagos have traditionally moved around seasonally," he goes on to say. "During the rainy seasons they farm the valleys, and during the rest of the year they spend their time in Caborca. Then when they get back to the farm it's not there anymore. This has led to problems with various miners and ranchers."

After the eight day occupation, Mexican officials agreed to meet with members of the tribe in Mexico City. Larios Tolentino the Instituto Nacional Indigenista - the Mexican equivalent of the BIA - thinks the problems can be resolved and says "it will be determined by Mexican law." The protestors have given the Mexican government 30 days for a decision on their demands which include schools, technical help and doctors for residents.

David Santiago Manuel Lara, governor of the Sonoran Papagos said the agency office in Caborca is supposed to aid the Indians but that under Director Mariano Careno Carlon, it is not doing so.

He said the director of the agency's national office, Ignacio Ovalle Fernandes, is a good

Photo credit: Michel Dubois from WIN

man, but that his orders from Mexico City do not always get carried out on the local level. They are asking for the removal of the local director, Mariano Carlon.

The takeover was reinforced with supporters from various American Indian tribes such as the Papago, Navajo, Kickapoo, Choctaw and Mandan, and others were from the Mexican Yacqui and Maya tribes.

Meanwhile eight Papago representatives remain inside the INI building until their demands are met. The Papago promise to reoccupy if, within 30 days, they do not feel that a sincere effort by Mexican officials to address their problems is being made.

-thanks to D.Larm for newspaper clippings

WASHINGTON STATE ASKING BUYOUT OF INDIAN TREATY RIGHTS

The Washington House of Representatives has voted to ask the U.S. Congress to buy back treaty rights that give Indians the right to harvest half of the state's salmon and steelhead. Though sponsors of the bill were accused of bigotry, the vote was 61-32 in favor. If the "memorial," as it is being called, passes in the state senate, it will go before the Washington State voters this fall. With voter approval, it would go to the U.S. Congress. Rep. Homer Lunquist, the prime sponsor of the memorial, said: "Federal judges are not competent to manage fishries. It is time for the federal government to accept the responsibility for an impossible situation that is a creature of its own making. The treaty rights are a federal problem." Rep. Lois Stratton, however, said the Indians gave up tracts of land for those rights. She said, "Racial oppression...always has, in the end destroyed the oppressors." She and others said President Reagan and Congress could not begin to afford to buy back the fishing rights and continue efforts to have a balanced budget. According to a report in the *Vancouver Columbian,* Rep. Frank Warnke glared at the supporters of the fishing measure and said, "You want it all. You don't want to live up to what you promised the Indians through your forefathers."

-from Indian News Notes

NAVAJO WOMAN SOLICITOR FIRED BY INTERIOR DEPARTMENT

Claudeen Bates Arthur, the only woman Indian lawyer with rank of field solicitor for Department of Interior, has been fired.

After 3½ years as field solicitor, Arthur was informed recently that she had been terminated for refusing to accept a transfer from her home reservation at Window Rock, AZ to a position in the Washington, DC area. The Navajo woman had been told earlier in a letter from Interior Department Solicitor William Coldiron that Navajo Chairman Peter McDonald had experienced a"loss of confidence" in her and offered her a promotion in Washington, DC. She declined transfer, and contested removal efforts, stating that the field solicitor's job description does not speak to maintaining a working relationship with the tribal chairman. Efforts are underway to appeal her termination with the Department. A letter signed by 50 of the 87-member Navajo Tribal Council had been transmitted to Interior Secretary James Watt earlier stating that they were "appalled that the Department would even consider ousting the first Navajo woman lawyer serving her people on her own reservation."

-from OHOYO

Menominees bury a friend of all people

Zoar, Wis. — Wallace Pyawasit, the gentle Indian who said our blood is all the same color, was buried in the ground he loved here on November 15, 1981.

A spiritual leader of the Menominees whose quiet manner of practicing brotherhood was widely known, Pyawasit died on November 11 of kidney failure and pneumonia. He was 62.

Several hundred people gathered in and around the community building to pay their last respects. The series of traditional ceremonies began in the morning with a prayer and feast, continued through the day with dancing and singing, and included an evening ghost supper.

Pyawasit was a spiritual leader of the Big Drum, one of the traditional Menominee religions. Leaders of the services here asked the reporters who attended not to write anything about what went on in the rituals. "Our religion is a private thing and we don't feel it is right to display it to the public," one of them said.

Pyawasit and his wife, Irene, worked frequently with the University of Wisconsin—Milawukee Native American Studies program. Many of their students and faculty members in the program were here Saturday. They stood about on the periphery of the ceremonial activity and watched as members of the Menominee tribe buried Pyawasit's body down in the village cemetery where the traditional wooden houses cover the graves.

In his siritual leading, Pyawasit conducted ceremonies of traditional worship in a quiet style. The message he imparted was one of living in harmony with all people and with nature.

At one of those ceremonies several summers ago, he greeted the dawn on the edge of a fog shrouded lake. As he prayed in his low gentle voice, and a ceremonial pipe was passed, a fire red sun broke over the horizon and a loon came pumping up out of the fog. It flew over the heads of those gathered there, its wings whispering in the cool dawn.

It was a moving moment and because Pyawasit seemed somehow to orchestrate it, the lives of those who were there were touched.

Pyawasit touched a lot of lives that way.

It is not necessary to talk in detail about what went on here Saturday. It is sufficient to say that his body was buried. But his spirit lives on, not only in the traditional way of his people, but with others who remember things like the whisper of the loon's wings in the sunrise and what Pyawasit said about the common color of blood.

(This article by Bill Stokes appeared in THE MILWAUKEE JOURNAL on Sunday, November 15, 1981.)

SHORT NOTES

BIA REPORTS 52 PERCENT OF US INDIANS LIVE ON RESERVATIONS

A recently updated report on the population of American Indian reservations, done by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, shows a total of 734,895 Indians living on or near reservations, including the former reservation areas of Oklahoma and 64,047 Eskimos, Indians and Aleuts in Alaska. This is 52 percent of the 1.4 million total Indian population counted in the 1980 census. The data, compiled from information provided by the BIA field offices, also shows an unemployment rate of 31 percent on the reservations. The reservations with the largest populations are: Navajo, Arizona, New Mexico and Utah, 160,722; Pine Ridge, South Dakota, 13,417; Papago, Arizona, 10,610; Gila River, Arizona; 9,592; Rosebud, South Dakota, 9,484; Turtle Mountain, North Dakota, 8,656; Yakima, Washington, 8,502; Hopi, Arizona, 8,439; and Forth Apache, Arizona, 8,010.

-from Indian News Notes

TRAFFICKING IN CANADIAN INDIAN CHILDREN

The liberalization of abortion and effective birth control have created a tremendous market in the U.S. for Canadian Indian children who, unlike American Indian children, are protected by legislation there, says a prominent government consultant.

The marketing of Indian babies from U.S. Tribes was stopped almost entirely with the enactment of the "Indian Child Welfare Act" in 1978 explained William Byler, one of the consultants who helped draft the legislation, but not before an estimated 100,000 U.S. Indian children were removed from their communities and culture.

Byler, past president of the New York based Association on American Indian Affairs (A.A.I.A), referred to the figures cited by Steven Unger, current president of the A.A.I.A., in his report to the 1980 Senate Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy.

The report stated, "The importation of Canadian Indian children has already offered at least partial explanation for the unconscionably high rates of placements of Indian children in the U.S."

Their report indicated that 1976 the State of Maine 114 of the 120 children adopted were Canadian Indian children. During the period from 1968-74 the report said 45• of children brought into Minnesota for adoption were Canadian Indian.

He feared Canada was unaware of the massive marketing of its Indian children for adoption in the U.S. and would have to move rapidly through the same procedures as the American Indian people did to pass a Bill through Parliament to protect the Canadian Indian child.

He compared the response of the male-dominated Canadian Indian organizations to his organizations' information of what the U.S. Tribal Chairmans reactions were. "...They just couldn't see the problem once the children disappeared. But it was the women - the mothers and grandmothers - who never stopped feeling the agony of the loss in their hearts. They carried that pain even if the child was taken fifty years before."

Byler said it was the concern of many Indian women who kept the problem from being a forgotten issue. He expressed hope the B.C. Indian Homemakers Association, an organization of Indian mothers and grandmothers who had only recently been informed of the high numbers of Canadian children being transported to the U.S. for adoption, would act in unity and with strength to stop forever the wholesale marketing of their children.

-from Indian Voice

FEDERATION HOSTILE TO NATIVE VIEW

The Canadian Wildlife Federation's hostile view of Native hunting rights is the most recent example of the ethnocentric and selfserving arrogance that historically has defined the wildlife conservation movement's attitude toward Native people.

It has been nearly 100 years since hunting regulations were first instituted in Canada, but wildlife conservationists continue to single out native hunting for criticism on the assumption that it is a main cause of wildlife destruction. This assumption has never been proved, statistically or otherwise.

Meanwhile, native elders, relying on direct observation, accurately perceive the main cause of continued wildlife destruction: loss of habitat due to "development" of wilderness regions in the name of "progress."

Wildlife preservation has been promoted only in a manner compatible with the economic interests and psychological needs of the white "settler population" of this country. Only one kind of conservation practice - modern, utilitarian, "scientific" (Euro-Canadian) management - is recognized as legitimate. Traditional, time-tested native practices, when they are ridiculed or dismissed as unscientific, impractical or superstitious.

-from Yukon News

JUDGE SAYS SIGNING OF FISH CLOSURE ORDER WAS A MISTAKE

A court order allocating half the Puget Sound chinook catch to Washington Indian tribes this year was described by U.S. district Judge Walter Craig as a "clerical error" and withdrawn. The order was signed by the judge January 4. State and tribal officials agreed that an immediate 50-50 allocation, as required by the order, would mean closing the Sound to non-Indian sport fishermen for six to nine months this year. The threatened closure angered thousands of anglers. Joe Dunn, Craig's court clerk, said the judge inadvertently signed the order just five days after signing a contradictory order giving the state more time to make additional arguments in the case. The Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission has reportedly agreed to give the state until 1985 to phase in the 50-50 allocation. The commission's offer to the state would require closure of some areas of Puget Sound of chinook sport fishing for 2 months in the spring.

MICMAC 1752 TREATY RULED INVALID

HALIFAX - A treaty signed in 1752 between representatives of the British government and Micmac Indians in Nova Scotia is invalid, the appeals division of the Nova Scotia Supreme Court ruled. The court dismissed a claim by James Matthew Simon, a member of the Shubenacadie Indian band, that he was immune from the provisions of the provincial Lands and Forests Act. Simon was convicted in a lower court on two counts of possession of a shotgun on a public road when hunting season was closed. His counsel based the appeal on a section of the treaty which states "the said tribe of Indians shall not be hindered from, but shall have free liberty to hunt and fish as usual." Justice J.A. Macdonald said in his decision the treaty was made for a tribe consisting of about 90 persons, "obviously, only for a small portion of the Micmac Nation.

-from Prairie Messenger

WORLD ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

The World's Indigenous peoples have reached an organizational milestone. This summer ten Indigenous organizations will host the first World Assembly of First Nations. The Assembly will be held in Regina, Saskatchewan, July 18—15, 1982.

The Assembly is expected to attract eight thousand delegates. Overall attendance at related cultural events is expected to surpass seventy-five thousand.

WAFN has secured indigenous delegations from as far away as Australia, New Zealand, Polynesia, Sweden, Central and South America.

In conjunction with the General Assembly, an international Elders Conference will be held on spiritual lands north of Regina. Seven Pow-wow committees in Canada and the U.S. have cancelled their celebrations in support of the WAFN Pow-wow. The WAFN Pow-wow is expected to be the largest gathering of indigenous peoples in recorded history. Plans are also underway for a rodeo, golf tournament, art show and other related events.

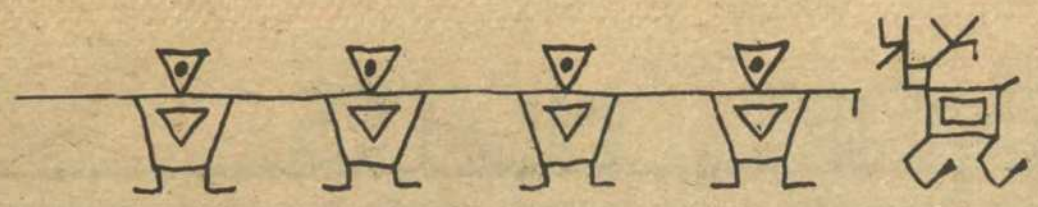
For further information and registration forms contact:

WAFN Conference Secretariat
109 Hodsman Road
Regina, Saskatchewan
S4P 3R9 Canada
tel: (306) 949-5666

CAMP YELLOW THUNDER — "Completing one small circle in the cycle of Life."

Photo credit: Dick Bancroft — *Russell Means, April 1, 1982*

JAMES BAY TODAY



In August 1980 the Grand Council of the Cree was abruptly shaken when it received word that four-month old Tommy Wapachee from Nemaska had died. He was suffering from constant diarrhoea and vomiting, symtoms that are typical of gastroenteritis, a major killer in the third world.

Although Tommy was taken several times to the St. Sauveur Hospital in Val d'Or, he was never admitted. The official verdict of Tommy Wapache's last illness was "crib death."

This blatant notice forced the Grand Council to take action. I contacted the eight villages requesting up-to-date information on any illness. The information was appalling.

In Nemaska the smallest village, population 200, four children were born that year and four children died. This was Nemaska's total generation wiped out in a few months.

In total the Grand Council found that eight children had died.

Later it was learned that government authorities had since spring been aware of a virulent epidemic of gastroenteritis originating in the coast Inuit villages. But nothing was done to correct the situation.

As the facts slowly emerged, it became apparent to the Grand Council that something had to be done -- fast!

Immediately, the Crees sent telegrams to the Minister of National Health and Welfare, Monique Begin; the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs, John Munro; and Quebec Minister of Social Affairs, Denis Lazure, requesting help.

The Crees waited and received no response until the press started asking questions about "the epidemic in James Bay."

At first they were assured by both levels of government that there was no epidemic.

Finally a joint Federal-Provincial medical team was sent into the territory to review the situation. This resulted in the team splitting on professional and political lines over what should be in the report.

Their report was released only after considerable pressure was applied by the Cree. The medical team was appalled by the conditions that they found and stated that there was indeed an epidemic in the Cree and Inuit communities.

The medical experts say the cause was contaminated drinking water, overcrowded housing, lack of sanitary facilities, environmental contamination, lack of adequate medical services and poor preventive medicine.

The Cree villages are, in fact, typical of Native settlements throughout the Canadian north. This the heritage of neglect and indifference to a developing society existing within a developed nation. That is what representatives from the World Health Organization call it.

The only difference, and this is crucial, is that the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement was to have changed all this. So what went wrong? What is wrong with the James Bay Agreement? Can it be made to work?

Stated quite simply--the answer is that when negotiations were over and the Agreement had been signed, the government's officials simply picked up their marbles and went home. They had what they wanted.

Since then there has been lack of good faith and no willingness to implement the Agreement. Stated another way, the Cree were simply too trusting.

A quick examination of the complex language in the Agreement will show that the conditions in the Agreement always protect government interests rather than Cree-Inuit interests.

The Agreement is riddled with conditions and loop holes that provide the technical basis for the government to refuse many of the provisions it seems to promise.

Most critical to this entire process is the continuing effort by Federal and Provincial officials to make other Land Claim Agreements. Their hope, is of course, that the Crees will go away before other negotiations were jeopardized. The stakes are enormous.

What evidence is there that new and future Land Claims Agreements will be respected if the James Bay Agreement is not. There are lessons to be learned for everyone. This is most critical for the groups that are negotiating now.

(Excerpts from: "Where Is James Bay?" article by Robert J. Epstein and Gary H. George, published in the March 12, 1982 issue of THE NATIVE PEOPLE.)

"Little girl from new village of Chisasibi, James Bay."
Photo credit: C. Biegert

Cree trapper setting beaver trap. Photo Credit: C. Biegert

JAMES BAY: THE SACRIFICE OF A CREE PEOPLE

(Editors' Note; We have not reported the issue of the Cree and the flooding of their James Bay Territory since 1976, and we see that the policies of governments concerning Native peoples and water have not improved. In order to prevent future "developments" it is vital that people understand what has occurred in other areas, in hopes of preventing more ecological and human destruction.

Destruction of the environment is proceeding at break-neck speed with little hindsight or forethought. It is frightening and one wonders how much further it can proceed before totally destroying the earth.

Dr. Gantcheff, Director of Environment for the James Bay Development Corporation states: "The protection of environment is a luxury, like many other things that we enjoy in the Western world because we can efford it. Economically, it's a luxury, ecologically, it's not." [James Bay: A River Drowned by Water, Wittenborn and Biegert, p. 129.]

The following article contains excerpts from a panel discussion on James Bay which was held at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, December 6, 1981. Phillip Awashish is from Mistassini, an inland village. He was the first Cree to hear about the James Bay Project. Dr. Georges Gantcheff, is Director of the Department of Environment, James Bay Development Company. Mr. Thomas Porter is a spokesman for the Mohawk Nation. John Mohawk is editor of **Akwesasne Notes.** *Melvin Weigel is a lawyer for the Algonquin Indians of Quebec. The moderator was Mr. Paul Wilkinson of McGill University.)*

PHILLIP AWASHISH: This discussion is centered around the hydro development project up in northern Quebec, the implications and the impact on Native People, their lands, their environment, and therefore their way of life. I will tell you a brief history of the James Bay Hydro Project and the Cree Nation of Quebec.

In May of 1971 the government of Quebec announced the James Bay Project. At that time the James Bay Project was conceived to be a large type of project which would dam the Fort George River or LaGrande, plus the three rivers in the southern region of James Bay which are called the Nottaway, Broadback and Rupert rivers. At the time the premier of Quebec was Bourassa. The announcement of the Hydro Project was, of course, a major plan for the government of Quebec to provide employment and other campaign promises.

The Native people of Quebec, of course, inhabited the territory of Quebec since time immemorial. The only physical evidence of any Canadian hydro project was the presence of scientists up north who were measuring the flow of the rivers, surveyors who were coming up to survey the land and territories. We were never actually consulted or informed about what was going on or what was being planned for the territory in so far as development of the hydroelectric resources was concerned. Therefore when this hydroelectric power project was announced we were, of course, astonished and also afraid and angered. When we saw the plans of the project which would affect tremendous amounts of land which were the trapping territory of the Cree Nation, we feared that not only would this hydro project disrupt the way of life of the people but also that it would leave nothing in its place. We feared the abrogation of Native aboriginal rights in the territory. We therefore had to approach the hydro project. We tried to begin negotiations with the government of Quebec and the crown corporations who were involved in promoting the project. These negotiations did not get anywhere. Therefore we simply terminated the political process of trying to either change or modify the hydro project.

At the end of 1972 we were before the Superior Court of Quebec (trying) to convince the courts that Native people have aboriginal rights which were not being contemplated by the James Bay Hydro Project. We had to convince the Superior Court of Quebec that this hydro project would definitely flood Cree trapping territories and therefore have a tremendous impact on the Native way of life. We depend on the land for our way of life, for our survival. The land provides the food, it has provided the clothing. The way of life created in the bush -- hunting, fishing, trapping -- is also a spiritual way of life, In fact, being in the bush is a spiritual experience in itself and therefore constitutes part of the religion of the Cree Nation.

The court case took quite some time, about six months, before the court adjourned in 1973. The judge took the case under advisement. In November 1973 Superior Court Justice Albert Malouf issued an injunction in favor of our Native people. The hydro project was ordered to stop. The proponents of the hydro project, the government concerns, were ordered to cease construction and to cease trespassing on Cree lands. The hydro project was continued a week later when the Quebec Court of Appeals ordered the construction to proceed pending the resolution of the question of Indian rights. Therefore, the court simply said the construction can proceed while we hear the case concerning the rights of the Cree Nation.

After the historic judgment of Malouf in ordering the hydro project to cease construction the government of Quebec made an offer to the Cree Nation for settlement of their case. The Cree Nation rejected the original offer from the government of Quebec which contained eleven points because of three points -- we were not satisfied with the land rights question, we were not satisfied with the environmental protection, and we were not satisfied with the plan of the hydroelectric project. We wanted some modifications in the hydro project. We were not satisfied with the question of recognition of hunting, fishing and trapping rights of the Cree Nation. All these points, of course, meant that the traditional way of life must be recognized, promoted, and insured that it will continue. Most of the Cree people, at this time of the year, would be in their trapping territories for the winter. That is the way it was, that's the way it is, and that's the way it will continue. When we rejected the offer from the government of Quebec we continued, or we initiated, serious negotiations between the Cree Nation, the Inuit People, the government of Quebec, the federal government of Canada, the Hydro Quebec Cmmission, and the Development Association of James Bay. We concluded an agreement in principle in November, 1974.

By November 1975 we had reached the final agreement which is called the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement. The agreement itself is not merely a statement of settlement of land claims in Cree, Inuit and in recent years Naskape territories. It's also a settlement of the conflict, the controversy, over the hydro project. It's a settlement outside of the courts.

I think calling them land claims settlements is misleading because the James Bay Agreement does not simply talk about or settle the question of land rights. It deals with the social and economic development of a territory and the participation of peoples within the territory. It also recognizes the Cree Nation. I'd rather use the term *recognition* of our hunting and fishing rights rather than "granting" of these rights by the government. We feel we've had these rights long before the Europeans came over to this continent and brought over their institutions, their governments, their laws, their values, their concepts. The agreement, itself, means for us the recognition of our traditional rights in, and to, our territories which we have traditionally and historically used and occupied.

The agreement concluded six years ago and is now going into the seventh year. The implementation of the agreement is, of course, another story. We do have certain problems with the government in terms of implementing the terms, the meaning, the spirit of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement.

Before the Agreement, one must realize, the Indian people of James Bay and their communities (were) isolated from the southern society. In a way that was true and we did not complain very much about it. A lot of our people wished we were simply left alone because the hydro project has brought the southern society up to the north.

The hydro project has brought about environmental changes to the Cree traplines. Some of these traplines exist as such but they are now under water. Some of the Cree people have forever lost traplines. We have always used the territories, the lands. Now that the lands are flooded it means we have to use whatever lands are left. It means reorganizing the traditional trapline territories. It means sharing whatever is left of the Cree lands, the Cree trapping territories. We feel at the present time, the land and its resources, its wildlife resources, are under a lot of pressure both from the use by the Native peoples and from the pressure the land experiences from environmental changes caused by developments such as the hydroelectric project. We hope that the land itself will bear with us, that the earth itself will bear with us, that it will continue toprovide for the needs of the Cree Nation.

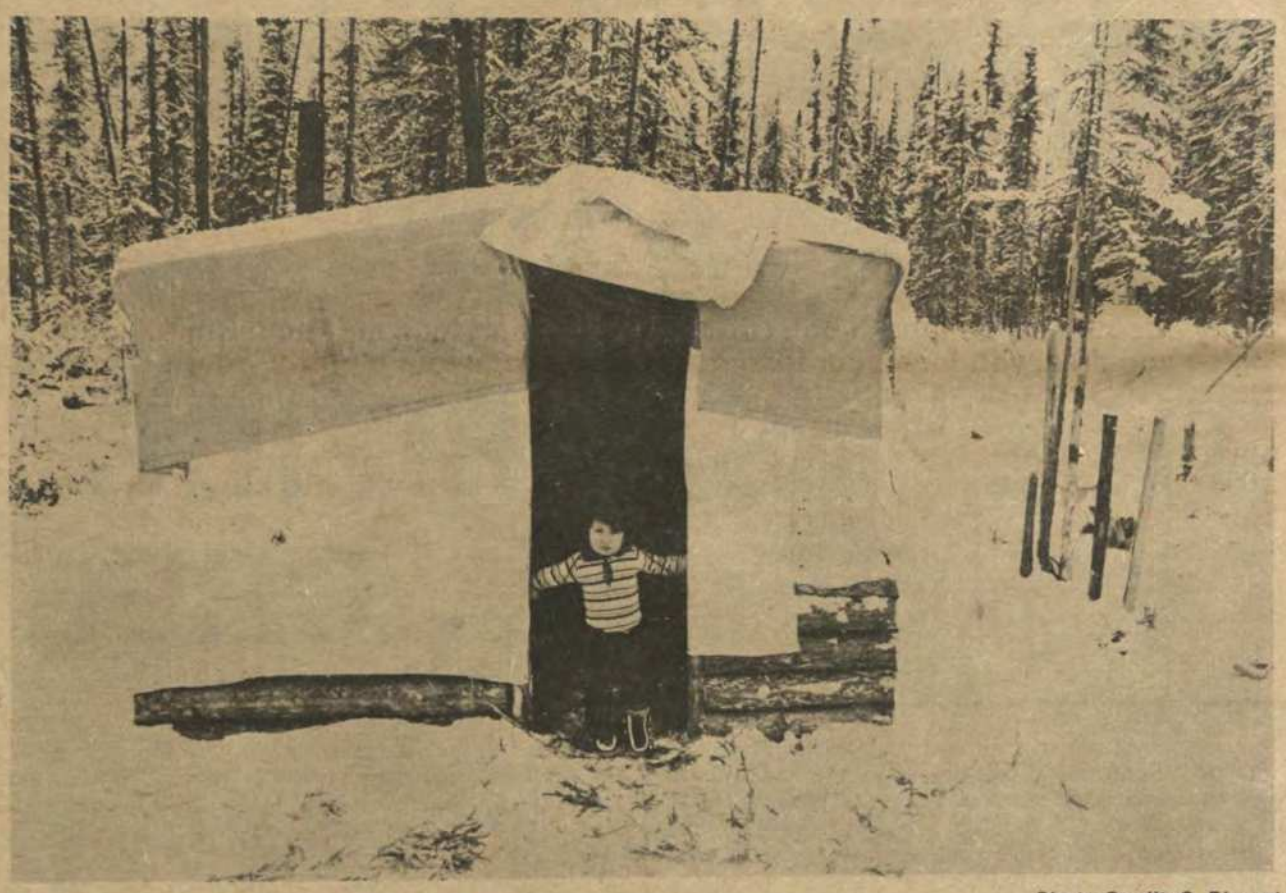
When we signed the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement we recognized construction of *one* major hydro project called La Grande Complex in 1974-75. That is the project which is being built at the present time. Presently the governments and the crown corporations -- that is the Hydro Quebec Commission and the James Bay Energy Corporation -- are planning further hydro projects within the territory of James Bay. The Great Whale River complex (has) plans for damming up the Great whale River south from where the smaller rivers are to be diverted into the Great Whale River. There is another hydro project being contemplated which is called the Nottaway, Broadback and Rupert Rivers Project.

The Cree people, of course, obviously oppose these projects because we have recognized only one project, that is the La Grande Complex. To have given recognition to one big hydro project is one thing, but then to have now experienced what is happening in terms of its construction and the process that is underway now and the certain phases which have been completed, we have come to realize the tremendous impacts and implications the James Bay Hydro Project La Grande complex has had, and will continue to have on the land, the resources, the animals and the way of life of the people. We tried tremendously hard to cope with the implications of the hydro project. Development is slowly coming up north. With the development we are facing social problems such as alcohol and drugs.

When we negotiated the James Bay Agreement the people were all concerned about their land, their rights. The media simply reported the multi-million dollars being contemplated in the agreement negotiations. Back home when we are talking about the James Bay Agreement the questions --the issues people talk about -- are all about the earth, its resources, the traditional way of life and rights of Indian people. When I went around consulting the people and negotiating on their behalf, nobody asked me how much money are they talking about.

When we talk about the hunting, fishing, and trapping rights that are so important to the survival of the people and their way of life, they are not simply talking about rights per se, as the government talks about rights, about whether a traditional has the right to hunt, fish, and trap. For us it's a way of life. It's also a religion. The act of harvesting, hunting, fishing or trapping has a spiritual meaning. We perform Native ceremonies when we conduct the traditional way of life within the Cree traplines. That's one thing I notice about society down here --there seems to be a divorce between the way of life and religion. Life in the bush --the way of life and religion -- are one. Therefore recognition of the hunting, fishing and trapping rights of the people is also a recognition of the religious, the spiritual well-being of the Cree Nation.

Charly Iserhoff, Cree-Trapper from Mistassini putting mink on frame. Photo Credit: C. Biegert

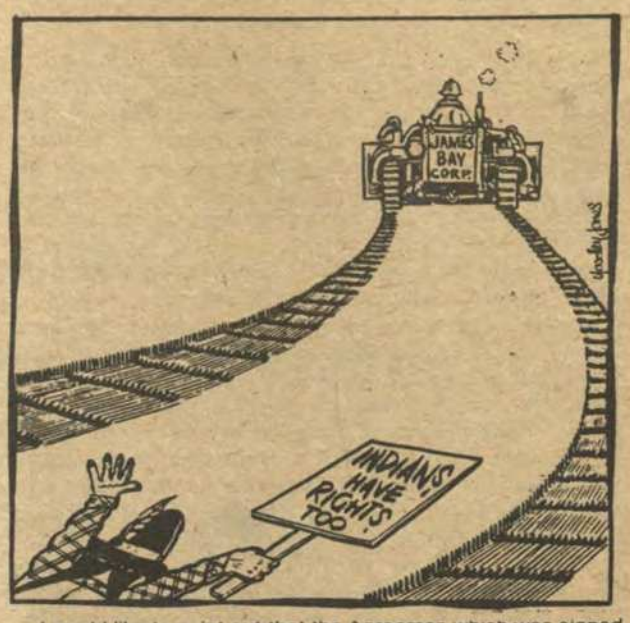


Cree hunting camp near Mistassini, James Bay.

Photo Credit: C. Biegert

"Whose fault is it that you cannot hunt anymore? Whom would you be able to show what you know and who can go where you used to go? It has been passed on for thousands and thousands of years, from generation to generation, and suddenly it's out. For what? For the dollar sign? It's why I never got involved with the James Bay Agreement. I don't want to help destroy my own people...Morley Loon, Cree

DR. GANTCHEFF: Up until now Phillip Awashish and myself have been sitting together in negotiations, but on opposite sides most of the time. Most of the differences existing ten years ago have been resolved and even if there are still differences between the Quebec government and the Native people, we are negotiating and trying to settle them.



I would like to point out that the Agreemen which was signed in 1975 must have some good points because the Cree signed it. It was mentioned that the coming of the White man brought changes in the way of life. I would like to point out that changes had begun much before anyone talked about building a dam there. Changes began when the white man came here, now more than 300 years ago. It is true that since the construction of the James Bay Project the impact is much greater in fact, and more upsetting for some Crees.

I would like to point out on the matter of land, that the culture was based on the primitive, on gathering, which requires very huge space. The North American continent north of the Rio Grande were estimated to be one million people. The settlers came and their population greatly increased up to the present time

QUESTION FROM AUDIENCE: The question is based on the statement made by Mr. Gantcheff that the Crees must have seen some good in the James Bay Agreement or else they would not have signed it. What would have happened if the Crees had not signed the James Bay Agreement? Would the development have gone ahead? Did the Crees really have any choice about signing it or not?

DR. GANTCHEFF: Well, we have to realize that is a highly hypothetical question and I – it's really not fair to ask me what would have happened. I know that the Crees were reluctant to go back to court before the agreement was signed, when it was agreed that they would cease all court proceedings...

PHILLIP AWASHISH: We took the initial position that we should stop the hydro project because it was encroaching on the rights of the people. It was threatening a way of life by causing negative impact on the environment and the resources. The James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, like I said, is a settlement outside the court. It provides for the construction of the hydro project and it also settles the question of land rights. For the Cree people the agreement was a satisfactory one, an acceptible one, because it recognized for the first time in our history the use and occupation of the territory by the Cree Nation.

We feel that in the long run the hydro project was inevitable, with or without the land claims settlement. The fact is that the government -- the federal government -- sees the national interests of the country as a whole as a priority over its responsibilities to Native people.

The federal government could simply extingish rights, claims and interests Native people have within the territory of James Bay. No government was willing to stop the hydro project. The Cree Nation recognized that fact. Even if we had not signed the Agreement, if we had refused to sign it, or we had not come to an agreement, the court case over the hydro project would have ended up in the Supreme Court. Either way it went, if we lost, the hydro project would proceed. If we won, I'm sure in some way the government would legislate to extinguish the rights of the people and simply provide for the construction of the project or some "settlement". Therefore we had to negotiate, in our view an agreement which would attempt to meet the needs and aspirations of the Cree Nation. And certainly the agreement attempts to do just that. Simply signing the agreement is not, of course, the only way of settling or dealing with the issues that were faced by the Cree Nation in the use of the territory.

It was just one way of trying to cope with our situation. At the time I signed the Agreement, we were satisfied with it. Today we wonder if we would have signed it, taking into account the interpretation and the attitudes of the governments which should have honored the Agreement.

THOMAS PORTER: I would like to make some comments on the question that was asked: Would the project have gone ahead even if there was not an agreement? From the experiences that we've had here in the south, speaking a little bit about the United States and southern Canada, I would say Canada would have gone ahead no matter what.

I was also listening to our brothers from the north speaking about the situation of the Cree people and the amount of changes that have occurred there especially since the James Bay Project. Our Cree brother said that a lot of the spiritual ways of our brothers of the north have to do with hunting and the trapline. There is a difference between the Cree and the Iroquois. Among the Iroquois we were agricultural people as well as hunters. When these animals they must trap are gone or affected, a whole race of people become affected. There is no shock absorber to save them. They cannot fall back on agriculture, the weather does not permit it. So it is not only the beaver or the moose or the elk, it is all the natives of the north.

We are talking now about hydro projects. We also hear about Project Archepelago which is going to occur here in Montreal which is going to affect Caughnawaga Mohawk land. I have not heard one Mohawk, no matter how old, female or male, or the smallest child, say that we agree with Project Archepelago, not one. But I have heard every Mohawk say Project Archepelago will not be built. We will have the chance to see what will happen if agreement is not reached that the Native people are comfortable with. In the next few years we will see what happens then. I'm going to tell you --when the Mohawk people say it is not going through, it will not go through! So history will be in the making.

We are going to depend on what is just, what is right. No matter what kind of human being you are, you have to have a spiritual base -- something within that says what is right and wrong. The Mohawk people -- we have said we want to have peace. We would like to make an agreement. Not an agreement brought about by coercion, because according to the international law, the law of democratic people, (the law of) civilized human beings, we can not coerce, we cannot threaten to get an agreement, if there is going to be peace. That is what the Mohawk people will depend on. That is what all people have to depend on.

we have 300 years of experience with agreements. We know what to expect. So we know what we must do. A lot of our people have survived because we depended on agriculture when the hunting was destroyed. We had some fallback. We were lucky. Even with that there's still some complications within our society because to live in this world today and to have justice and honesty -- it is very difficult to do today.

One of our women, who is a leader and the mother of many children said this a few years back. She said, "Mr. Trudeau, Mr. President, When you have polluted the last river, when you have caught the very last fish, and when you have cut down the very last tree, world leaders, it is too bad that then, and only then, will you realize you can not eat all the money you have in the bank." That is what I would like you to think about.

The Mohawks feel very strongly, as our Cree brothers do, and we will see. Only just people will have a real agreement and only when there is honesty can there be a coexistence or peace among mankind on the simplest level. The Native people of North America -- if they are not dealt with justly and honorably there can be no civilization worthy of existence.

QUESTION FROM THE AUDIENCE: Do the Cree people have any control, right now, over the James Bay Hydro Project?

PHILLIP AWASHISH: The land has been categorized into 3 main areas. Category 1 land is the territory around the Cree communities. These lands the Crees have rights over and there is no development whatsoever without the consent of the Cree community. In other parts of the territory, which is the large part of the James Bay region, development could be influenced by the Cree. What I mean by "influenced" is that the area is an environmental and social impact region which applies to all the development projects within the territory of James Bay. The Cree Nation has a say where impact of the project is concerned. To put it in a nutshell, whether we have control over development, the answer depends on the category of land or territory we are talking about.

DR. GANTCHEFF: The Crees actually have a very strong voice with their presence in the two committees of the region which has been agreed upon... It is those committees which decide whether the impact study is acceptable and it is the second committee which decides if the impact study is actually truly acceptable. They actually have a very strong influence, not only on hydro development, but on any development that takes place on land 2 or land 3, and on land 1, of course, only the Cree decide what they are going to do. The power of decision is retained by the governments, not by the committees.

PHILLIP AWASHISH: Hydro projects are constructive or destructive according to one's point of view. For the Cree hunters, trappers, and fishermen, all hydro projects are destructive.

"It is hard to express. When I first saw where the water used to be and it's all dry land now, and where trees used to be and it's all covered by water now, it really affected my senses. I don't know if you understand me - something good inside you dies, you lose your innocence. It affects your identity, who you are and where you belong, you know, the fiber of mankind within the laws of the galaxy; you know in Cree everything is connected somehow, man's spiritual bonds with the environment. You are subtracting something very special away from you, something very deep down. You no longer are who you were before." Walter Hughboy, Chief of Wimindij (Paint Hills)

Phillip Awashish, Cree, James Bay. Photo Credit: C. Biegert

"You cannot think of the future, of five or ten years from now, when you know that tomorrow you might not be able to go hunting because of the weather. But you know how to survive in that. You prepare yourself. You make sure you have enough food and wood. Generations of my family have been in the bush, they have survived in the bush. When my mother isn't in the bush, she's not feeling that she's fulfilling her role. My mother is happiest when she is in the bush and looking after her little kids when they get into trouble. It wasn't fully explained to them what would happen ten years from now..One thing I know for sure is, my father's trap line is going to be underwater. But do you think my father knew that? Nobody explained to my father about his trapline, which he had passed on to us....The Agreement is only good for ten years, and after ten years, that's it. I hate to think what is going to happen. And this is what my music is all about." Morley Loon, Cree — Singer

JOHN MOHAWK: I think it might be useful to try to focus on the issue of what have the governments of Canada and Quebec been doing in the north relatie to the people there? What is happening there of historic significance, especially in the light of what is happening with the Canadian Constitution? Let me give some definitions that the world is using that will be used to judge Canada in the years to come. Let me guarantee you that you will soon hear Cree people, Dene people and other peoples of the north remind you of these definitions.

The Cree people are a distinct people of the world. They are distinct from the Canadian people, are they not? They are distinct because they speak a distinct language, possess a distinct history, and occupy a distinct land base. They are a distinct people under the definition of a distinct people as recognized in international law.

About forty years ago the world was horrified when they discovered that there was a nation state in the world which was enacting policies designed to destroy a distinct people of the world. You will remember that period of time in the 1940s when it became undeniable that a country was trying to destroy a whole people in Europe. The world was horrified. They discovered that the nation state of Nazi Germany was undertaking a national policy for the extermination of the Jewish people in Europe. After the war people were horrified to find there were no international laws against genocide. The laws of nation states were such that the internal affairs of the nation state allowed a state to enact policies resulting in the genocide of distinct peoples. After the war, after the United Nations was founded, when people had a chance to begin discussing that state of affairs, they passed a law known as the International Genocide Compact of 1948. This Compact was not designed only to stop people from machine gunning other people or putting them in gas chambers. It is an international compact which makes it illegl for nation states to adopt policies which are gross violations of peoples' right to a continued existence as distinct peoples of the world by destroying them as a linguistic group, as a biological group, or as a cultural group. Those of you who would be so curious as to read that compact will see that it does not only state that it is not legal to physically destroy a distinct group, but it further states that it is illegal for a nation state to adopt policies which have the effect of destroying distinct peoples of the world.

Now I ask you this, those of you who are looking at what's going on in the North: Have Canada and Quebec adopted policies which are gross violations of the rights of the the Cree, Anishnabi, and other people of the North? Has that happened? I ask you read the genocide compact to see what it takes for Canada to be guilty of the crime of genocide relative to the peoples of the North.

To destroy a peoples' ecology and economy is to destroy them as a distinct people of the world. We're not talking now about the process of going up north and making it possible for the Cree or Dene to move to Ottawa where they can have subsidized housing and a pension. According to the sense of the Genocide Compact even that "benevolent" way of acquiring the rights to the land of the north would be genocidal because it would destroy their ability to exist as a distinct people.

Was there coercion, coercion beyond doubt, coercion beyond the Crees' ability to resist, that led to the signing of the James Bay Agreement? That is a good question and I believe that question will one day sit before an international tribunal.

Last year Canada was brought before an international tribunal in Europe which found that in fact Treaty 9 people had been denied their rights guaranteed in the Genocide Compact. Canada never responded to the charges. To the question: Do so-called aboriginal peoples have the right to exist, the civilized nations of the world have decided, yes, they do, they have the right to exist as distinct peoples. Has Canada decided to join in that opinion? Or does Canada claim the right to steal their land, destroy their economy and ecology, to herd them into villages and leave them trapped in a situation where they do not have even proper sewage or water treatment?

Let's get it straight. The Native peoples are distinct peoples. They are not Canadian citizens only. They are distinct peoples of the world and they have a right to exist as such. But does Canada recognize the rights of distinct peoples to continue to exist as distinct peoples? I think that if we follow step by step the actions of the Quebec government, the corporations that were

Billy Bearskin's children, Chisasibi, James Bay. Photo credit: C. Biegert.

involved and the Canadian federal government, we will find that in fact Canada does not recognize the rights of these distinct peoples. I think Canada is committing a crime against the Cree people, irregardless of the signatures on the James Bay Agreement.

These kinds of questions are going to be asked over and over again because of the plans for development of the Yukon and the McKenzie Valley and the Beaufort Sea. These questions are going to be asked about the rights of the Inuit, Athabascans, and all the peoples of the North. I believe Canada is going to be accused by its Native peoples of consistent gross violations of their rights to exist as distinct peoples. What's Canada's answer? What's Quebec's answer?

DR. GANTCHEFF: To reply to the statement of Mr. Mohawk, and just to please our moderator who hopes not everyone agrees, I'll disagree with you. I would like to point out that in the history of mankind there's always been laws, customs, and so on. And there is one fact -- conquest. Conquest and international treaties. In 1759, as we know, the French were beaten by the English on the Le Grande, and about four years later the 1763 Proclamation by King George II affected Quebec's right to be a British colony. The fact that a person or his ancestors had treaties five centuries or fifty centuries ago does not always give rights, and that has to be understood. It's next to impossible to go back to the original point. We can't go back 10,000 or 20,000 years. The fact is that the right of conquest existed even among Native peoples. If my memory is right, only about 100 years ago ... the Eskimos were driven off a (nodule) of the St. Lawrence River by Indians. So conquest exists even among Native peoples. We shall not forget that.

JOHN MOHAWK: I want to say a thing or two about the Doctrine of Conquest. When the United States defeats Germany, it does not mean that all German citizens lose all their rights to their lands, and when the United States defeats Japan that does not mean that all Japanese citizens lose their rights and the U.S. makes Japan the 51st state, does it?

The Doctrine of Conquest says that first there has to be a cause for war. Then there must be a just war. Then the war is won. In the absence of a just war, even according to the doctrines of medieval times (this is a fuedal doctrine of law but even according to that,) the annexing of another people's territory or rights is a theft. Now if you can show me where there is or was a war with the Crees, that Canada or Britain won, then we can talk about conquest. But if all we have is this assertion of annexation by national right, through the assertion that Canada somehow extends to the Arctic and so forth, if that's all you have, then what you are talking about is not conquest but simple theft. There was no just war, there was no conquest.

Hopefully Canada is a country that has some dignity, some maturity. There was no just war with the Inuit. The Inuit people never attacked anybody. No one was ever conquered in the far north. What you are talking about is an assertian by Ottawa that these lands now belong to Canada and that you have rights to do as you wish under a doctrine of law known as the plenary powers doctrine. That's the assertion that Canada has the right to "take" Native land. Call it theft, if it is theft, but let's not call it the Doctrine of Conquest. There was no conquest....

All major developments in the area of taking of Indian lands has been done in the interests of private companies. Governments never took Indian land. Just grasp that for a second. The Hudson Bay company was not a government. It had a charter, it could make treaties, it could do all the things a government could do: put people in jail, pass laws, and so forth. It was given all these powers.

These companies are now coming to the Canadian public and saying, "We want to develop this Indian land for the benefit of us all. We all need the energy." They then go to the Crees and they say, "We're going to take your land and if you object to that we'll get the army to come and shoot you." That's what happens. The threat of force is present. The people who are going to bring the guns and do the shooting are the Canadian government or the Quebec government or whoever has the army, but look at who manipulated the deal. It was the energy corporation that drew up the plans. And the energy corporation, even the public ones, got their money for this development from U.S. banks. Somebody made billions of dollars as the result of this development.

Look at the James Bay Project. Canadians, you think you get a lot of energy from that project, but in fact all that energy and power is being exported to the States. It's being sold over there and some stockholders are pocketing the money, and you think it's Canadian stockholders, don't you? Well it isn't. The Indians were ripped off and it wasn't even by Canadians! Understand that there has never been a process by which Indians lost their rights to their lands except that the process was initiated by private interests to the benefit of private interests. In fact, the capitalization of North American industry came from the illegal taking of Indian lands, exactly the way Cree lands are being taken in the north today, exactly the way the Yukon Indians face dispossession in the Yukon. It is the way private interests accumulate a capital base at the expense of the Indian land base. The richest man in the colonies at the end of the American Revolution was George Washington. He got that way because he speculated in Indian lands. All the treaties that were broken reflect the manipulations of speculative private interests within the American government.

The same process is going on in Canada right now. Who will get rich from the taking of these Indian lands? Who will benefit? Obviously it will be private enterprise in the United States and those people who work for that private enterprise in Quebec who will benefit from that development. Unless you understand that process you will not understand what is happening. The way they do it is to convince the Canadian people that the taking of all these Indian rights and the "nationalization" of energy resources is in the public interest. You will notice, very shortly after, that all the nationalized public energy resources are turned over to private hands for development. So private personalities who have clout in government get rich. The Canadians and the Indians get ripped off. That's the process that goes on in Canada. Private interests with power in the government manipulate the press, the manipulate the news media, they manipulate your mind, they manipulate the school books you have in grade school and high school, they manipulate every thought you have in a day. They can use language to make you think it's acceptable for Canada to nationalize energy resources in the name of the people of Canada. But what they are doing is not for the people of Canada. That's a myth.

DR. GANTCHEFF: I would like to point out this is the first time I heard that there was a question... to shoot the Crees. I would like to point out that Hydro Quebec is a government-owned corporation, and finally, in a capitalistic economy, it is not difficult to find links with private industry and private people whatever development you pick, whether it is Inuit or not.

(For more information on James Bay we have a new book:* James Bay: A River Drowned By Water. *Available from Akwesasne Notes — see book page.)

The Women Who Fight

(The focus of THE WOMEN WHO FIGHT for this issue is native women as political organizers. We feel strongly that native women can, and do, take strong leadership roles based on their commitment to the survival of their people.

Dagmar Thorpe, the author of the following article which first appeared in NATIVE SELF-SUFFICIENCY, Sept. 1981, is the founder of the Native Nevadans for Political Education and Action. She served as the organizer for the Western Shoshone Sacred Lands Association, and was recently selected as "Indian Woman of the Year in Media" by the National Indian Media Convention for her "excellence in research and writing on the impact of the MX missile on Nevada tribes.". She has been an active fighter for Indian rights since the Alcatraz occupation.)

The need for Indian political organizers is increasing, as the threat to Indian rights and sovereignty are increasingly threatened in the 1980's. Political organizing is essential to the survival of native peoples, our cultures, lands, and resources. Activism is the organizd means of self-defense. When the life of an indvidual is threatened and he seeks to protect himself from that destruction, his action is viewed as an act necessary for survival. To defend one's people from destruction is an act necessary for survival of the people. It has been predicted by many native peoples that the 1980's will be another terminationist era. It may not be called termination and may come disguised in the name of development of tribal resources, budget reductions, "equal rights and responsibilities" -- but the impact upon native people will be the same - the devastation of the lands and resources of the people; and the ultimate genocide of the people themselves.

The attacks upon Indian land resources is sympotomatic of a larger problem. The need of American society to consume vast amounts of energy and material goods is quickly eradicating the entire natural world. Native people are ultimately faced with two alternatives: to join mainstream American society, their value systems, and all that goes with the "American Way;" or to fight to protect the integrity of the native world and all that signifies. The essence of political organizing is a basic consciousness about the world we live in. American society is clearly headed on a path of self-destruction. The signs are clearly visible: acid rain, chemical waste dumps, underground fires, pollution of the air and water, nuclear waste. The world is becoming contaminated, cancerous with the result of man's greed. Presently, it is possible for the Indian or the non-Indian to isolate themselves but the path of destruction will catch up with the human beings that are creating it.

The basis for native political organizing then, is the commitment to the natural world and to your people to protect them from destruction; and to strengthen and build your own community to be a good place to live. Our teachers are our elders, the traditional and medicine people. The principles of living with other human beings and with the natural world - which we will need for our survival, can only be learned from our elders.

Organizing must be done inside and outside of our communities. To organize externally means to provide a circle of protection around the community so that it may survive and flourish with minimal interference from the outside. It provides the means whereby the culture, religion, and ways of the people will continue. To organize internally means to provide the people with the skills and knowledge needed for their own survival. For many, these ways have been taken from the people. To organize internally means to develop the ability to become self-sufficient; to relearn the ways of love, respect, and harmony with each other; and to live in such a way as to replenish, not destroy the earth.

CASE STUDY:
THE WESTERN SHOSHONE

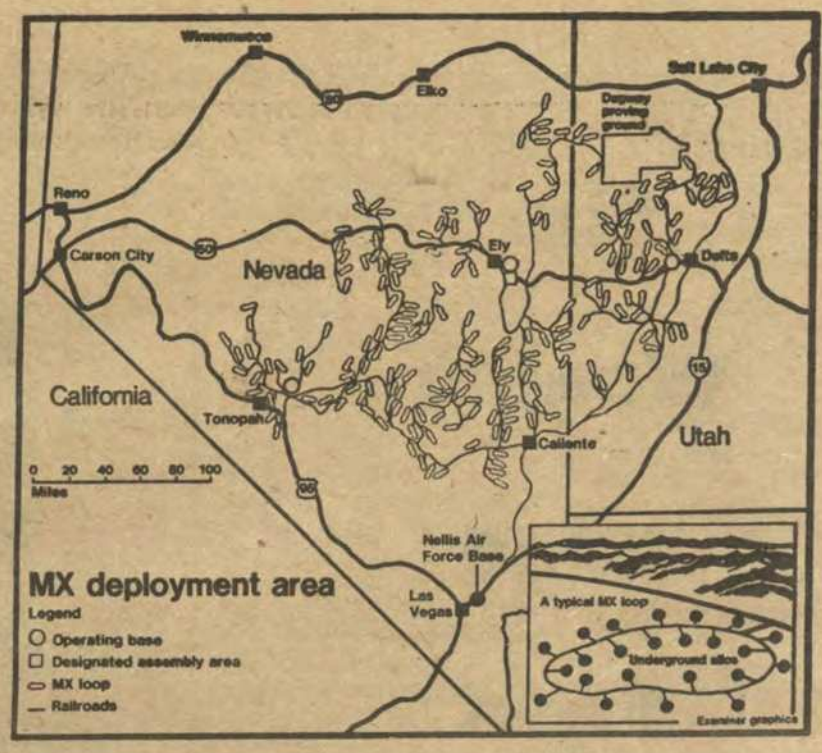
In some cases, only the elders are actively seeking to protect the lands of the people for future generations. One such case is the Western Shoshone. The Western Shoshone Sacred Lands Association was formed by traditional elders in 1973 to uphold the Treaty of Ruby Valley which recognized their ancestral lands. The United States government, through its Indian Claims Commission, is seeking to seize Shoshone lands. This commission was established to compensate Indians for the loss of lands and resources taken by the US government. In the Shoshone case, lands were never taken legally. Compensation to the Shoshone would mean the loss of 23 million acres of ancestral lands. In effect, the total annihilation of the Shoshone world is at stake. The efforts of the people to organize have been, in large part, due to the strength and commitment of the elders. Very few young Shoshones are actively involved in this struggle for land rights.

The case of the Western Shoshone and their attempts to protect their treaty and aboriginal land rights – and to prevent the siting of the MX missile on Shoshone lands – is a dramatic example of how survival of native rights depends on political organizing. The Western Shoshone Sacred Lands Association is committed to protecting Shoshone lands for future generations through litigation, community and political organization. The major focus of the Association's organizing efforts is to provide the Shoshone people with accurate informaton regarding their land rights. The lack of information – or the government misrepresentation of the truth – is one reason why all the people have not become unified on this issue.

The Association publishes a quarterly newspaper which reports on major developments in the lands rights struggle. The newspaper also provides in-depth analysis of those issues impacting their rights: the Indian Claims Commission, the MX missile system, and the Treaty of Ruby Valley. The newspaper is a vital means of organizing because it provides the people with the information required to make informed decisions.

One specific example of how community education influenced the Western Shoshone fight for their land rights was the outcome of the only hearing of record sponsored by the Bureau of Indian Affairs on this issue. At stake was the passage of the Western Shoshone distribution plan. Had this plan been approved, the Western Shoshone money would have been distributed and their lands fight would have become a dead issue. As a result of an intensive community education campaign among their people, 87% of those that testified at that hearing opposed distribution of the judgement award until Western Shoshone title had been resolved. The distribution plan was halted and a bill must now be introduced into Congress if the money is to be distributed.

How did the Western Shoshone achieve this success? The Association developed a political action plan with the express purpose of halting the distribution plan. A massive community education campaign was initiated through the following specific actions: community meetings were held throughout the eleven Shoshone communities, articles were published in the statewide Indian newspaper, programs were aired on Indian and public television, the Association published a newspaper and brochure which was directly mailed to every household, posters and bumper stickers advocating Shoshone land rights were distributed. The direct effect of these organizing efforts was the massive opposition in Shoshone country to accepting money for their land, and the temporary halt of the distribution plan.



As part of its political action plan, the Association also realized that the Western Shoshone issue had to take on national proportions. The Association outlined the following specific activities which it undertook to arouse public awareness and support on this issue: the establishment of a Western Shoshone Support Group with representatives in major cities throughout the United States; press packets were distributed to 100 members of the national media when significant issues arose; and speaking engagements were established nationally. As a result of these efforts a strong network of non-Indian support was developed.

A significant opportunity for building liaison with non-Indians was presented by the government's plan to place the MX missile on Shoshone lands. The Association is working closely with a variety of organizations to defeat the MX and recently participated in a national anti-MX road show. The Association made a presentation to a statewide meeting of citizens opposed to the MX and as a result the Shoshone lands rights issue has become a significant part of a state MX opposition.

WOMEN IN POLITICAL ORGANIZING

In Nevada, Indian women have been the backbone of Indian political organizing. This author co-founded Native Nevadans for Political Education and Action (NNPEA) in 1978 to establish a state-wide mechanism for political education and organizing. This organization was subsequently headed by Debra Harry, a Northern Paiute from the Pyramid Lake Reservation. At present, it is coordinated by Janet Moose, a Southern Paiute woman living in Reno. Pearl Dann, a Shoshone woman from Beowawe, has been active with the Western Shoshone Sacred Lands Association. Each woman had the commitment to her people as the underlying principle for political action. Each woman used her particular skills, knowledge, and interest to work in her own way. It is important to know that each began with no particular background in political organizing. Following are profiles of each of these women, as an example of what we can do in our own way to support the survival of our people.

In 1978, Native Nevadans for Political Action was founded principally by women to provide information, resources, and action on political issues facing native Nevadan people. This organization conducted a research training project, initiated a column in the statewide Indian newspaper on political and legal issues affecting Native Americans; began a local Indian television program; provided community education in laws affecting Native Americans, political organizing, and major issues; and assisted tribes with media in regard to their particular issues.

DEBRA HARRY
(Paiute)

In 1979, Debra Harry, a 22 year old woman from the Pyramid Lake Reservation in Northern Nevada, took over the leadership of native Nevadans for Political Education and Action. Pyramid Lake is known nationally for the tribe's long fight to defend water rights. Debra grew up on the reservation and attended school at Riverside, California. She is a community-based woman with strong ties to the land and to her people. Debra worked as a fish culturist with the Pyramid Lake

fishery and as a tribal court advocate. In 1978 she was hired as the research analyst for NNPEA.

As research analyst, Debra took on responsibility for producing and hosting the organization's "On Indian Time" television program. She wrote an extensive research paper on Sagebrush Rebellion before it became a national issue. She organized a series of seminars on Indian rights and sovereignty throughout the state of Nebada. In November of that year, Debra and Navajo activist John Redhouse organized the Nevada Indian Environmental Research Project. This is a project of NNPEA and the American Indian Environmental Council to protect the lands and resources of native people.

After six months of employment, Debra took over the leadership of NNPEA. She was principally interested in working to oppose the MX missile system in Nevada. She developed articles on this issue for the "Native Nevadan," coordinated Indian involvement with other organizations seeking to defeat the MX, acted as a watchdog of pending MX related activities and became known as a strong advocate and spokesperson for her people. She began to work on Nevada Indian issues throughout the United States. Debra believes that it is the responsibility of Indian youth to work on behalf of their people.

"Consider youth involvement as a responsibility on our part to offer individual contributions to support the survival of our people. No one else will do this for us. This work is not for individual gain but for the future generations."

JANET MOOSE
(Southern Paiute)

Janet Moose, a Southern Paiute woman, took over the leadership of NNPEA. Janet grew up in the city of Reno. She worked as an advocate with the Reno-Sparks Tribal court and worked with NNPEA as an environmental researcher. In 1980, she became a student at Friends World College and spent six months in Guatemala. This college emphasizes individual education programs; and in 1981 while enrolled as a student, Janet became the coordinator for NNPEA. Janet's principle interest is environmental research and analysis. She has published several articles in the Nevada Indian press on nuclear, chemical, and other environmental issues. Janet has continued Debra's work in opposing the MX missile system; and has just completed a national speaking tour of citizens opposed to the MX. She toured nine major cities throughout the United States, speaking on behalf of the Western Shoshone Sacred Lands Association. During that tour she commented:

"I am always thinking of the people and the land. As an Indian person, I feel that it is important to help people understand that if the MX is placed in Nevada, we Indian people of the Great Basin will be destroyed. Genocide does not always mean a direct act of killing members of a tribal group. Genocide also means when a person loses their heart and mind, and are no longer Indian in the true sense. An Indian needs the land in order to be at peace and live a natural way of life. The way it is meant to be."

Janet has continued the liaison work with non-Indian organizations to ensure that the Indian viewpoint is well represented on the MX issue. At present, she is coordinating a national letterwriting campaign and telephone campaign on the MX issue.

PEARL DANN
(Shoshone)

Pearl Dann, a Shoshone woman from Beowawe, Nevada is a member of the traditional Dann family which has long sought recognition of Shoshone land rights. Her aunts, Mary and Carrie Dann, were the principals in the Dann decision which brought the Western Shoshone land rights question into court. Pearl is a young traditional woman and a sundancer She is one of the few young people to actively participate in the Shoshone land rights fight. Pearl became a moving speaker on the lands rights issue and represented the Shoshone at the Fourth Russell Tribunal in Rotterdam, Holland. She came into the organization with no background in organizing and emerged as a strong advocate for the rights of her people. The strength of her commitment is evident from this poem she wrote as a tribute to the elders:

"A Message to the Elders of All Red Nations:

Grandma and Grandpa, I thank you for your strength and courage for continuing the fight for the freedom of our sacred mother earth and freeing our people of all the red nations. Our sacred mother earth has always provided food and water for the people of all nations. Just like you, grandma and grandpa, you have always provided for your children. We must all fight for the protection of our sacred mother earth."

(Our thanks for permission to reprint this article from: NATIVE SELF-SUFFICIENCY newspaper, PO Box 10, Forestville, Calif. 95436. Subscription rate $6.00 per year.)

The question of who owns much of the Western Shoshone open range land which is claimed by the federal government in Nevada, was argued before the Ninth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals in San Francisco on Jan. 13, 1982. The case, a civil trespass action against two Western Shoshone Women, Mary and Carrie Dann, for grazing livestock without a federal permit had been pending in the U.S. courts for eight years. The Indian women are members of a band of Western Shoshone Indians, which like other bands has continued to occupy its aboriginal lands in remote areas of Nevada. The charges were dismissed, but the women were ordered off their own land.

"The U.S. chose to leave these Indians where they were in the 19th century because the white man could see no value in their lands," said John O'Connell, attorney for the Dann sisters, "The government simply forgot about them and never got around to stealing their lands, it now wishes to drive them off their lands while pretending it happened a hundred years ago."

The 1863 Treaty of Ruby Valley recognized Western Shoshone ownership to the lands described in it. The treaty gave non-Indians limited rights to homestead and mine the lands of Western Shoshone in Nevada. There has been no cession of the so-called "public domain" lands by the Western Shoshone to the U.S. The government and attorneys representing a group of Western Shosone seeking money compensation agreed to value their lands at 1872 prices for the purposes of an Indian Claims Commission judgement award. The government contends, however, that this valuation date was the actual date that all Western Shoshone lands were taken.

O'Connell says, "This case is different from other Indian Claims Commission cases because the Indians are in possession of the land." The BIA looked at its maps and determined that since this land was not a federally recognized reservation, therefore, it must not be Indian land.

The U.S. District Court for Nevada ruled on April 25, 1980 that the U.S. had never extinguished Western Shoshone title to the lands in Nevada. But, that the Indians recently lost that title on Dec. 6, 1979 when the Indian Claims Commission announced its award of $26 million dollars for 24 million acres of aboriginal Western Shoshone lands. Shoshone resistance to accepting that award has led congress to delay payment of the judgement until the trespass action against the Dann's is settled.

Both the Danns and the government have appealed the district court decision to the Court of Appeals. The government will argue for recognition of the 19th century taking date. The Danns take the position that the Indian Claims Commission award has no effect upon Western Shoshone ownership to most of eastern Nevada. The case has been taken under advisement by the judge and at this time the people await the decision.

For more information contact: John O'Connell, attorney, 44 Exchange Place, Salt Lake City, Utah 84111 (801) 532-5835.

BIG MOUNTAIN: RELOCATION AND STOCK REDUCTION CONTINUES

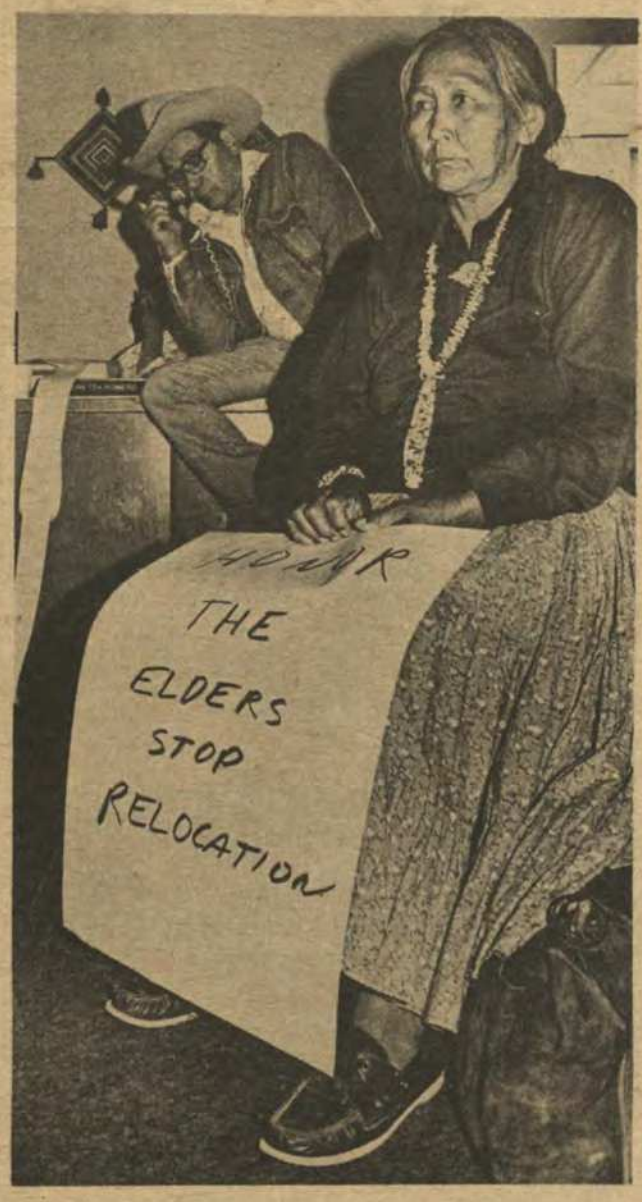
Despite land-exchange negotiations between the Navajo and Hopi tribal councils, the scheduled relocation of approximately 9,000 Navajo people continues. The Navajo and Hopi tribal councils met for two days during March, 1982 and future talks are planned. These were the first discussions of this kind since 1975. Both tribal councils have agreed on a news black-out of this sensitive issue. The Big Mountain people have attended these negotiations but only as observers. Ivan Sidney, Chairman of the Hopi tribal council, reported that the meetings contained "good gestures."

According to Steve Goodrich, acting executive director of the Navajo Hopi Relocation Commission, the goal of the negotiations is to reduce the number of people who will have to relocate. Goodrich said the land-exchange talks came about after the Navajo asked the Hopi for such an arrangement. Several alternatives according to Larry Anderson (AIM) are Bureau of Land Management lands, other resevation lands, state, and private lands.

Of the estimated 10,000 people living in the former Joint Use Area, 95 percent are Navajo and 5 percent are Hopi. The majority of the people are against PL 93-531 which is the legislation enacting the relocation issue.

According to Goodrich, about 400 families (which is approximately 1600 people) have been relocated. The people are offered a $5,000 incentive bonus if they voluntarily sign up to relocate. Most of the people are relocated to cities, but some are relocated to other places on the reservation.

The following articles were furnished by the Burnham/Big Mountain Support Group.)



STOCK REDUCTION AT BIG MOUNTAIN

About 10,000 Dine (Navajo) live on lands within the Navajo Reservation that, according to the U.S. Government, became the exclusive property of the Hopi Tribe in 1977. These "Hopi Partitioned Lands" (HPL) include Big Mountain, where resistance to the government's 50 year stock confiscation effort has been most determined. The herding of sheep, goats and other livestock has been the center of these traditional people's way of life for several centuries.

Although the 1974 Navajo-Hopi Land Dispute Act (P.L. 93-531) gave what was then estimated 3300 Dine until 1986 to "relocate", the 1980 Amendments (P.L. 96-305) gives them until January, 1982 to reduce their livestock to what the Bureau of Indian Affairs says is the "carrying capacity" of the 1 million acre HPL.

In October of 1981 the BIA issued final permits to the residents of the HPL. All non-permitted stock are to be confiscated by early December, according to the BIA. The government's own figures indicate that of the 9500 Dine residents of the HPL, only 249 will be permitted to continue raising livestock. The total number of livestock allowed will be what is described as 4000 "animal units." One sheep counts as one "unit", while a cow counts for four, a horse for five. Thus the net allowable livestock is about 3,000 sheep and goats, and small number of cows and horses. The people also have to pay permit fees ($25.00 for a horse) to use their permits.

In a typical situation, one of the traditional women applied for permission to continue to graze her 27 sheep, a cow and a horse. She was granted 10 "units", which is enough to permit one horse, one cow, and one sheep.

She was also given a ten day "appeal" period. This appeal period is meaningless to a traditional person who at best has a vague understanding of U.S. law, who would have to travel quite far to make the appeal, and who has no lawyer. The Tribe (which is helping implement this program) has named one of its lawyers as being available to "represent" these nearly 10,000 people.

This woman's family was subjected to forced stock reduction in the 1930s and 1940s as part of the "New Deal for Indians". The result then was the near starvation of many traditional people, as the government reduced the Navajo herd to about half a million head. While the BIA describes this confiscation in terms of "grazing regulations," "carrying capacity," and "range improvement," the fact is that these are crude sciences at best, and reresent the imposition of European-based scientific values ona traditional people in total desecration of their spiritual and physical relationship to Mother Earth.

As resistance by the women of Big Mountain to the partition of their homeland enters its fifth year, the U.S. Government is escalating its attempts to remove them from their land. Since 1977 there have been several confrontations, one involving gunfire, between the people of Big Mountain and government fencing crews attempting to divide what has traditionally been a jointly used area for the Dine (Navajo) and Hopi Indians in the Four Corners area. In each case the women of Big Mountain have put a halt to the fencing. The government has several times attempted prosecution and in every case has lost. The government's latest strategy, in light if its inability to convict the women, is to keep them either in a semi-probationary status in the meantime. The most recent trial on December 29 erupted into violence when Judge Ed Lawrence sabataged proceedings by attempting to forcibly expel Marlene Benally's lawyer, who had just moved for dismaissal of charges due to lack of a speedy trial. Marlene and her lawyer filed charges against the judge for assault and civil rights violations later that day. On the following day Judge Lawrence denied the dismissal motion and set a new trial for May 19, 1982.

A nationwide protest of this continued persecution has been called for April, to be held in Flagstaff and other locations across the country. In light of the continued legalistic terrorism of these women, the following demands are being made:

1. All fencing, livestock confiscation, and other relocation activities being carried out under P.L. 93-531 must be halted. P.L. 93-531 must be repealed.
2. The sovereign rights of the Independent Big Mountain Dine Nation must be respected; all charges should be dropped due to a lack of U.S. jurisdiction.
3. Any trials must be prompt, fair, and by a jury of peers.

The rights of these people to continued security on their homelands are guaranteed in the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, the 1868 Navajo Treaty and the 1882 Executive Order. The lands being partitiioned are treaty lands, and thus are sovereign lands. Having discovered that P.L. 93-531 would indeed mean that the Dine would be forced to relocate, despite the promises of all the officials involved in the settlement process, seventy Dine elders reaffirmed their sovereignty by issuing a Declaration of Independence on October 28, 1979, declaring that the federal government has no authority "to intrude or disrupt the sacred lands at Big Mountain."

Since the arrests the U.S. has on four occasions called for trials, but has not yet conducted even one trial to completion. Fugitive warrants are out for two of the women. One such warrant was executed against Alice Benally late last summer. The women have tried to post bond and have been refused. The December 29 incident makes plain the U.S. strategy.

Write letters and telegrams to these people:

Judge Ed Lawrence, J.U.A Court, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bank Bldg, Flagstaff, AZ 86001.

Dan Jackson, Solicitor, BIA, 3030 N. Central Ave, Phoenix, AZ 85102.

Pat Ragsdale, Area Director, B.I.A., 3030 N. Central Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85102.

Ted Krenzke, B.I.A., 1951 Constitution Ave., NW, Washington, D.C. 20245.

William French Smith, U.S. Attorney General, Constitution Ave & 10th St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20530.

For More Information:

Call: Burnham/Big Mountain Support Group, 1412 Cypress, Berkeley, Ca 94703 (415) 841-6500

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Write: Larry Anderson (AIM), Box 342, Ft. Defiance, AZ 86509, (602) 729-5104.

The Vaccination of the Yanomami

For more than 100 days, an expedition consisting of two medical doctors and the photographer Claudia Andujar braved the rigors and dangers of the height of the rainy season, but neither the heavy rains nor the great distances prevented it from reaching the Yanomami villages. The three members hiked through the rain forest, canoed through rapids-filled rivers, and flew in small planes, determined to bring their cargo to its destination.

It was promise of life for the Yanomami people: hundreds of ampules containing vaccines against measles, a disease that is already spreading among the indigenous population of Roraima and northern Amazonas. The cargo was both precious and delicate, as the vaccines had to be maintained at a maximum temperature of 6° Centigrade. The three-member team thus had to carry a box of ice to keep the ampules from deteriorating.

The purpose of the medical mission was not only to give the vaccinations but also to make a detailed report on the health situation of the Yanomami -- or at least of that part of the population which they could reach given the limitations of time, money, and the natural difficulties of the Amazon region.

The work took place between December 1980 and March 1981 by Doctors Rubens Brandao of the University of Sao Paulo Medical School of Botucatu, and Claudia Andujar, Coordinator of the Commission for the Creation of the Yanomami Park in Sao Paulo. The project was funded by a grant from the Ministries of Foreign Relations of Denmark and Norway, at the request of the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA). The National Indian Foundations (FUNAI) of Brazil authorized the project and helped in setting up the infrastructure for it.

The 10,000 Yanomami Indians of Brazil live in approximately 200 villages in a territory of more than six million hectares. Because of the population's low density, the team found difficulty not only in conducting a systematic health survey but also in determining which Yanomami group needed attention first. They chose the area of Uraricaa, in the north-eastern section of Yanomami territory, because, as Claudia Andujar explained:

"Our concern was for the nearness of the Indian longhouses to the Santa Rosa gold-prospecting area, where thousands of men are looking for gold along the Uraricaa River. The Indians could contract serious sickness from these men."

In the past, many Yanomami of the Uraricaa area had learned to prospect for diamonds and gold in nearby areas. Today they are trying their luck at Santa Rosa, which is difficult for white prospectors to reach. Although the Indians have already been exposed to malaria and flu, they have no protection against measles.

On arriving in the Uraricaa area, the team found the Indians in the middle of a weeping ritual. They were lamenting the death of a kinsperson who had been victimized by malaria.

After completing this visit, the team returned to Boa Vista (capital of Roraima) and planned to travel next to the Anarni River area. This area is situated along the Northern Perimeter highway and is now accessible by car. The Yanomami of this region suffered brutal contact during the opening of the road in 1974.

Upon arriving at the FUNAI post, the team found that two-thirds of the 70 Yanomami of the Ajarani were living outside the Indian area. They had already been vaccinated so the team proceeded to a village called Duckfoot, a four-hour hike from the post. There they met a young Yanomami girl, fourteen years old, who had a serious case of tuberculosis. They tried to take her to the FUNAI assistance post, but she fled. By the time the FUNAI agent found her again, she had died.

The girl actually belonged to a Yanomami group from the Mucajai area, northeast of Ajarani, where there is the highest incidence of tuberculosis reported among the Yanomami of Roraima. This group had been visiting their kin of the Ajarani area for a festival, a common and very important means of socio-cultural integration among Yanomami groups.

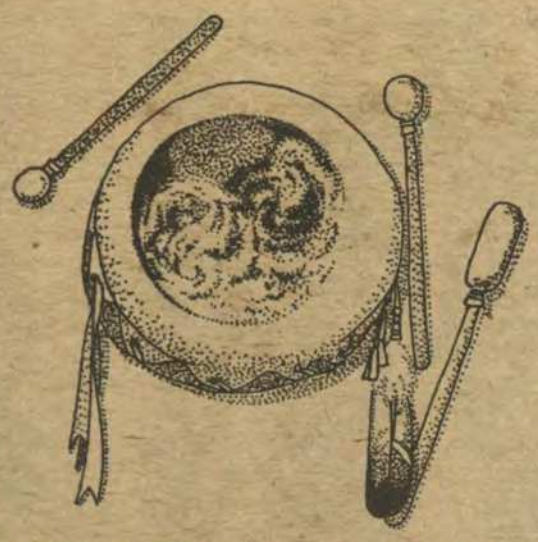
The team spent Christmas Day at the Catrimani mission station and then returned to Boa Vista for more vaccines. They then flew to the Yanomami area of Marari, in the state of Amazonas, two hours by plane from Boa Vista. Evangelical missions maintain a post at Marari for 270 Yanomami Indians, but medical programs have only recently been initiated. In 1979, the Yanomami of Marari suffered serious hepatitis epidemic which had been brought to them by Indians working in the extraction of forest-vines (piacaba).

The team then visited the mountainous region of Surucucu, where 4,500 Yanomami live in near-isolation from whites, and the Auaris area, where the Indians had already been immunized by evangelical missions. At Auaris, however, the team found one of the highest incidences of river blindness ever recorded among the Brazilian Yanomami.

Returning to Amazonas, they recorded serious cases of tuberculosis among Yanomami at the Salesian Catholic mission of Maturaca. Later, the two doctors returned to Sao Paulo, leaving Claudia to vaccinate the Yanomami of the Marauia mission, to the west of Maturaca. After difficulties in getting a plane and then a boat to a nearby mission station on the Rio Negro, Claudia found that the ice for preserving the vaccines had run out and only a limited time remained before the medicine would be contaminated. With the help of FUNAI agents, however, the vaccines were saved and eventually the expedition reached the Yanomami to administer them.

In the end, between 700 and 800 Yanomami Indians were immunized against measles and a health program was initiated for the Yanomami. Soon, the three-member team will present a complete medical report to FUNAI and the Inernational Work Group for Indigenous Affairs. The vaccinations have brought life and protection from disease to 800 Yanomami -- an historic step toward the survival and well-being of the Yanomami Nation.

(Reprinted from a translation by the Anthropology Resource Center of Boston, Massachusetts.)



Tarahumara: Where Night Is the Day of the Moon, *by Bernard L. Fontana with photographs by John P. Schaefer, Northland Press, Flagstaff, AZ., second printing 1981, 167 pgs., oversize, bibliography, index, glossary, map. $27.50*

The Tarahumara live in an area of approximately 20,000 square miles in the Sierra Madre Occidental Mountains of Mexico. They call themselves Raramuri "foot runners," in their language which accurately describes this wonderfully healthy Native People. Access to their lands is still basically by foot. "The high protein diet, low meat, vitamin-enriched diet (corn, beans, squash)of the Tarahumaras - when they can get enough of their own food - in combination with the natural conditioning of their whole way of life, makes them superb endurance runners ...their extraordinary physical condition cannot be denied." Fontana cites many superb examples of their ability as runners.

The approximately 50,000 Tarahumara have, amazingly, resisted, to a large extent, over 300 years of limited contact with Spanish soldiers, missionaries and Mexican people. "That so many men, women, and children persists in distinctive, centuries—old cultural traditions in spite of their nearness to all the complexities and attractions of modern industrial society is an important part of the story," says Bernard Fontana in his preface. Indeed, the Tarahumaras ability and determination to acculturate as little as possible in order to maintain their Way of Life is the fascinating aspect of this culture.

Fontana, an ethnologist at the University of Arizona and Schaefer, president of the University of Arizona, made several visits to the Tarahumara uplands, visiting with the rural, less acculturated Tarahumaras rather than the more acculturated city Tarahumara, as well as studying historical, anthropological, botanical and medical literature available on the Tarahumara. Fontana extensively cites the work of Carl Lumholtz, which was first published in 1902. It is stunning when Fontana compares his experience and observations (in 1978) with Lumholtz (1890's) only to find there has been very little change.

The familiar history of colonialism in Tarahumara country is the same blueprint used on all Native Peoples. First come the missionaries, then the soldiers. The people fight back but eventually they are either driven from their homelands or their culture degenerates to that of the colonizers.

The Tarahumara were exploited for their land and natural resources. Mining took much of their land as gold, silver, and other metals and minerals were discovered. After World War II, timber became the next economic "development."

"People who use caves for shelter and oxen to plow and who grow their own corn, squash, and beans seem wonderfully exotic to us. But after spending some time with them and returning to what we are wont to call 'civilization,' one realizes that it is we who are exotic and not they. Everything Tarahumaras do makes simple and direct sense. One need not be an anthropologist nor a psychologist to perceive the relationships between their activities and their physical and social environment. We, on the other hand, are given to doing many things for reasons none of us can really understand. Large numbers of us live long lives of noisy desperation. Tarahumaras' lives may be shorter, but they are not desperate," says Fontana.

This is a culture truly dependent on nature, "To lose the corn it [granary] contained to insects, rot, theft, or mildew is to lose one's livelihood for the year. Corn, as well as beans and other dried seeds kept in the granary, are the staff of Tarahumara life. To lose them either occasions undue dependence on relatives and neighbors, or, worse yet, undue dependence on Mexican cash economy. The latter forces a man to leave home and to sell cheaply the only commodity he has in good supply, his labor. The alternatives are all undesirable - malnutrition, starvation, or accepting uncertain charity from non-Tarahumaras. It is better by far that the granaries be properly constructed and their life-sustaining contents carefully guarded. It is not only that corn and beans support the lives of individual Tarahumaras; they are the underpinning of the Tarahumara way of life. In that sense, a granary is more than a storage unit; it is the stronghold of Tarahumara culture."

Adaptation, acculturation, is a fact of life. However, it appears the Tarahumara have adapted only those technologies which are useful to them and do not pollute their culture and environment. For example they now use steel axes, cloth manufactured elsewhere, metal buckets, etc., Their "Easter" ceremonies are a unique blend of old and new.

Several factors are disappointing in Fontanas coverage of the Tarahumara. First, quotes from Tarahumara people are scant while ethnocentric quotes from Jesuits and anthropologists abound. This serves to present a disturing assessment of corn beer as it is used in Tarahumara culture.

"So a Tarahumara's wealth is primarily in himself and in the numbers of family members and friends upon whom he can rely for help and companionship." In todays disintegrating world the Tarahumara's can give us some insight into their world and perhaps they can give us some direction.

The pictures are outstanding and make the cost of this book well worth it.

Native Americans in Film and Video, *edited by Elizabeth Weatherford, published by the Museum of the American Indian/Heye Foundation, New York, 1982, 152 pages, paperback, $5.95.*

The work of undoing stereotyping of Indian people is enhanced by this resource book published by the Film Project of the Museum of the American Indian. **Native Americans on Film and Video** lists over 400 films and videotapes on Indians of North, Central and South America.

In the past decade the number and quality of films on Native Americans have increased and several areas — independent productions, recent television programs, resources, special film collections, and works by Native American filmmakers — have never been cataloged. This book makes for easy access for the "hard to find" film.

The listings are in alphabetical order by film title. Information given on each film includes; date of production, running time, production credits, language spoken in film, format in film and/or videotape. A list of distributors is also included for convenient rental or purchase.

The book should be of interest to Native American communities interested in developing their own documentary projects as well as film programmers, teachers, anthropologist and Indian support groups.

An excerpt from the book (which also does a fine job of reviewing each film title) is as follows:

Annie Mae, Brave Hearted Woman
1979, 84 min. Produced, written and directed by Lan Brooke Ritz. 16mm. Color. Dist.: Ritz.
An activist in many struggles for Indian rights, Annie Mae Aquash was mysteriously murdered in the aftermath of the 1973 occupation of Wounded Knee. In this film the reasons why the murder remains unsolved are traced through looking at who Annie Mae was and how her death was politically motivated. Her relatives, Micmacs in Boston; her co-workers at a Survival School day-care center; and her activist friends and associates all contribute to showing us a courageous woman with strong convictions. The events at Wounded Knee are also examined in detail to provide the necessary background for understanding her life's work.

Annie Mae may have been assassinated for fighting for the freedom of American Indians. People who knew her at Wounded Knee dispute FBI claims to the contrary. They are outraged, as the viewers of this film will be, at the FBI's attitude and apparently unnecessary mutilation of the body. The filmmaker has constructed a convincing film which shows why Native Americans have acted to defend their rights and why the Federal system is considered the primary abuser.

There are many more listings on a variety of topics including films on environmental issues, crafts, art and artists, social dances and ceremonies, folktales, and films on current events all dealing with Native people from the Artic to the Andes.

This book makes for interesting reading and well as being informative. Our congratulations to the Museum of the American Indian for a fine job of cataloging important information.

REVIEWS

Missing, *by Thomas Hauser, Avon Books, New York, 1982, paperback $2.95.*

On September 17, 1973 Chilean soldiers dragged Charles Horman from his Santiago home, forced him into an army truck, and took him to the National Stadium. A few days later the best evidence indicates he was executed, one of two Americans to die in the bloody overthrow of the Allende government by the military junta of General Pinochet.

The purpose of this book is to raise the question whether the U.S., CIA or other U.S. military intelligence organization either participated in the decision which resulted in Horman's death or knew about that decision and simply refused to try to save him. The author, some of the informants and Horman's family have strong suspicions strengthened by some fairly strong circumstantial evidence that American officials indeed know much more about the circumstances of Horman's death than they have admitted.

Equally as absorbing is the story of U.S. interference in the internal affairs of what in 1973 was *the* South American country with the strongest tradition of democracy. Allende was a Socialist who came to power through the election process. He was deposed by a Chilean military which had strong U.S. support. The evidence is overwhelming that the U.S. not only knew in advance of the coup, but that they actually inspired it. While the President of the United States was telling the American people that the U.S. was involved in Vietnam in an effort to make the world safe for democracy, he was also planning the overthrow of a democratic government in South America. Chile is a symbol of American foreign policy. After the coup, thousands were incarcerated and subjected to torture. Lists were drawn up and people were arrested by the military, taken to detention centers, interrogated about their politics, and often these people were lined up against the wall at the National Stadium and other detention centers and shot. People are still being assassinated in Chile because of their political activities as union organizers.

The book is a chilling reminder of the power and avarice of the American military, and good background reading in these days of nightly news reports about CIA destabilization plans in Central America. According to the jacket this book was formerly released under the title *The Execution of Charles Horman* and is now a motion picture released by Universal Pictures starring Jack Lemmon and Sissy Spacek.

Native People and the Canadian Constitution

On April 16, 1982, the Queen in right of Canada made her appearance in Canada's capital and fulfilled her obligation by taking the final steps in the long drawn-out process of patriating the new Canadian Constitution. This step is seen by the federal government as the beginning of a new era for the nation as a whole. The first effect to be felt by the Canadian public will be a dramatic rise in the price of oil products made necessary under rules put into place by the new Constitution.

The government says that the event marks a fresh start for a renewed relationship between Canada and its Native people. Many of Canada's Native people, however, fear it marks a new and dangerous era in the struggle for recognition of their rights as Indian, Metis and Innuit peoples.

Section 25 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, for example, states that nothing in this Charter shall be construed so as to take away in full or in part from any Native treaty or other right of the Native people of Canada. It further states that this protection extends to rights recognized by the Royal Proclamation of 1763 and to those rights which may be acquired in the future through land claims settlements. Native people fear that the wording is inadequate and that the future holds litigation which will lead to court decisions which could, and many fear probably will, define Native rights and freedoms out of existence.

Section 35 is allegedly intended to provide formal constitutional recognition and approval of *existing* Native and treaty rights. However it limits those rights to those which exist as defined by federal policy and court decision at the time the act comes into force, and many Native leaders correctly point out that at this time Canada recognizes very few rights and freedoms of Native peoples as Native peoples.

Section 37 provides a process by which federal and provincial governments and Native people can discuss the identification and definition of these rights, but does not allow Native people any power in this decision-making process. Many Native people feel that this section represents part of an existing scheme to terminate Native rights and freedoms and to attack existing Native rights to lands.

The Canadian Constitution process produced a considerable amount of fear and loathing on all sides, but it also forced Canada's Native people to learn something about their theoretical rights and about possible (and probable) attacks against all rights, theoretical and recognized. The learning process has not ended, indeed, it has only just begun.

Many Native groups opposed passage of the Constitution, filing lawsuits and lobbying the British government. It produced more, and more sophisticated, political activity among Canada's Native people generally than has been seen in the past two decades and possibly much longer than that. At one point, a demonstrator claiming to speak for Canada's Indians was expelled from the public gallery of the House of Lords after throwing a copy of the international human rights convention into the debating chamber. One peer, the 39-year-old Earl of Gotsford, was also threatened with expulsion after he attempted a filibuster on Indian rights.

In the end the Constitution was passed, as everyone who was realistic about it knew it would be, and Canada's Native people were left to devise new strategies for their survival in the climate of an altered reality. For decades Native people penned their grievances and sent them to the Queen with little result. What the struggle to first affect and then to block the adoption of the Constitution made clear is that writing letters to the Queen doesn't work, indeed entering Canada's political body doesn't work, and that new and more sophisticated approaches need to be devised if the Native people are to survive.

LB

BOOKS

HISTORICAL

APOLOGIES TO THE IROQUOIS, by Edmund Wilson. Journalist's view of Iroquois communities in the 1960s, with some reflections on the past. Paperback, $2.95.

CUSTER DIED FOR YOUR SINS, by Vine Deloria. Paperback, $1.75.

GREAT UPON THE MOUNTAIN, by Vinson Brown. A biography of Crazy Horse. $10.95.

INVASION OF AMERICA, by Francis Jennings. Excellent work on Indians, colonialism, and the cant of conquest. $4.95.

HISTORY OF THE FIVE INDIAN NATIONS, by Cadwallader Colden. $2.95.

PARKER ON THE IROQUOIS, by Arthur Parker. Valuable reference work. Hard-cover only. $12.95.

7 GENERATIONS, by D. Blanchard. The history of the Mohawk people at Caughnawaga. Created for use as a textbook by the Caughnawaga survival School. $19.50.

LEGAL

NATIVE RIGHTS IN CANADA, by Cumming and Mickenberg. To provide Native peoples of Canada and their legal advisors with the necessary comprehensive treatise on the law of aboriginal rights. $8.95.

CHILDREN'S

CHEER UP OLD MAN, by David Martinson. A story of an old man with a warm heart. Excellent for children. $1.25.

NORTH AMERICAN INDIAN DESIGN COLORING BOOK, by Paul Kennedy. Designed to show the richness of Indian art. $1.75.

TALES FROM THE LONGHOUSE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA, by Indian children of British Columbia. $1.95.

THE BIRD IN THE SUGARBUSH. Excellent for young children. $1.25.

SKILLS & HOW TO

AMERICAN INDIAN NEEDLEPOINT DESIGN, by Roslyn Epstein. Designs for many projects. Paperback, $1.50.

AUTHENTIC INDIAN DESIGNS, by Maria Naylor, 700 illustrations. Paperback, $6.00

CRAFT MANUAL OF NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN FOOTWEAR, by George White. Introduction to 25 different styles of footwear. $2.25.

INDIAN HERBOLOGY OF NORTH AMERICA, by Alma R. Hutchens. $12.00

INDIAN SIGN LANGUAGE, by William Tomkins, signs to convey meanings of over 870 words. $1.50.

CONTEMPORARY

IN TOTAL RESISTANCE, Statements and Poetry from Leonard Peltier, Standing Deer, and Bobby Garcia. Published by Leonard Peltier Support Group, 70 pgs. $2.50.

BEHIND THE TRAIL OF BROKEN TREATIES, by Vine Deloria. An Indian Declaration of Independence. $5.95

GOD IS RED, by Vine Deloria. Offers an alternative to Christianity through a return to Indian beliefs and concepts. $6.95.

NATIVE HARVESTS, Recipes and Botanicals of the American Indian, by Barrie Kavasch. $5.95.

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF ANNA MAE AQUASH, by Johanna Brand. Anna Mae was a Micmac sister who fought and died for the cause of Indian people. The FBI hounded her, persecuted her, slandered her on purpose and very likely killed her. $8.95.

PHILOSOPHY

THE WAY, by Shirley Hill Witt and Stan Steiner. A collection of Native writings for young and old. $3.95.

THE WHITE ROOTS OF PEACE, by Dr. Paul Wallace. A fine hardcover edition of the classic story of the founding of the Haudenosaune (Iroquois) Confederacy. $7.95.

NEW BOOK

JAMES BAY PROJECT — A RIVER DROWNED BY WATER
by R. Wittenborn and C. Biegert 1981, The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, printed in West Germany, written in English and French, 284 pgs., illus.

Wittenborn and Biegert traveled into the James Bay Area interviewing, photographing, and documenting both sides of the issue of the flooding of traditional Cree lands. Their coverage is an intriguing, insightful treatise on one of the most disasterous, genocidal "development" projects to take place in current times.

Includes discussions, essays, interviews, maps, video, paintings, drawing, photos, and information on gatherings, plants, furs and traps. $25.00

BASIC CALL TO CONSCIOUSNESS

A new edition, a new book. Five new chapters have been added to this small classic of the Native movement. They include: The Hau De No Sau Nee: A Nation Since Time Immemorial, by Segwalise; Thoughts of Peace: The Great Law, by Sotsisowah; Deskaheh: An Iroquois Patriot's Fight for International Recognition; Geneva 77: A Report on the Hemispheric Movement of Indigenous Peoples, by Ismaelillo; The Original — A Basic Call to Consciousness, The Hau De No Sau Nee Address to the Western World; and Our Strategy for Survival, by Sotsisowah. A new, full-color cover and several photographs from international events are also featured. $5.50.

PAGANS IN OUR MIDST

PAGANS exposes the true nature of journalistic racism in the years 1885-1910. The focus is on the Onondaga, Mohawk, and Seneca Nations of the Six Nations Iroquois Confederacy. $6.95.

DESKAHEH

Tells the story and speech of a Cayuga statesman who went to the League of Nations in Switzerland, in the 1920s, to present the case of sovereignty for the Iroquois peoples. .75

TALES OF THE IROQUOIS

Presents sixteen teaching legends written by a Mohawk author, Tehanetorens. Illustrated by Mohawk artist, Kahonhes.

TWO FILMS AVAILABLE:

HAUDENOSAUNEE: WAY OF THE LONGHOUSE

A beautiful, comprehensve film, Haudenosaunee tells about the ways and attitudes of the people of the Longhouse -- the Haudenosaunee (or Six Nations Iroquois Confederacy).
The League of the Haudenosaunee, established some one thousand years ago, is one of the oldest, continuously functioning governments in the western hemisphere. It is based on a comprehensive and interrelated code of principles and concepts known as the Great Law of Peace. This film explores some of those concepts as it frames a portrait of the contemporary Haudenosaunee peoples -- their professions, schools, organizations -- a synthesis of the old and the new: the essence of survival.

Length: 13 minutes
Sale price: $250.00
Rental: $35.00

AKWESASNE: ANOTHER POINT OF VIEW

A portrait of an Indian community faced with two choices: survival or assimilation. This film explores the obstacles faced by traditional Mohawk people in their past two years of struggle to establish peace in their territory. A fast-paced film, replete with clear and succinct descriptions of a contemporary Indian community fighting to retain traditional rights.

Length: 28 minutes
Sale price: $450.00
Rental: $50.00

Both of these films are in color and may be purchased in 16mm or on videocassettes.

Rentals are available in 16mm only.

For more information contact:

Akwesasne Freedom School
P.O. Box 290
Rooseveltown, NY 13683
(518) 358-2073

RSP Media Enterprises
429 Greenbrier Drive
Silver Spring, MD 20910
(301) 588-1911

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IN THE INDIAN COUNTRY

A modern junkyard in Cornwall, Ontario turned out to be a leading economic indicator for a couple of us the other day. There is a plan to move some buildings of the Akwesasne Freedom School this summer and we had gone over to check into some moving equipment.

There was a large yard full of every manner of scrapmetal (pipes, rods, plates, old radiators); there was large and bulky, heavy-duty moving and crushing equipment; there were trucks for hauling and flat scales (built right into the ground) for them to weigh in and out of; here and there you could see the little figures of men working--and at the entrance, just where the cars pulled in, two of the meanest-looking, firm-muscled, nasty-eyed dogs I've ever seen.

"They're like pussy-cats during the daytime," the owner of the place said, once we were inside. "But watch out when night falls, then they'll tear you right up." He smiled. "I had them trained that way."

My friend, whom I'll call Sam, knew the owner, had worked for him once, and so they fell into easy conversation, Sam explaining to him what we were looking for and why.

There are some positive changes occurring these days at the Mohawk Nation. It is a time when the people are truly rethinking their priorities. There is a surfacing agreement among the people that the United States and Canadian economies will be increasingly incapable of supporting our growing population. The feeling of nationhood, the idea that people could develop an adequate economy within their own territory, that they must educate their own children, organize their own health care system--these have become real priorities among the Mohawk People.

The Akwesasne Freedom School is one of our projects in line with these priorities. The school is expanding this summer to a new site where there will be more land for gardens and other self-sufficiency activities. Two buildings already completed needed moving. Sam gave their dimension to the junkyard owner, who paused to wonder.

The owner was a short, light-shouldered man with a hawk's nose and eyes that could fashion out a very perceptive kind of smile, the kind of smile a man puts up who has been around once or twice in life. He picked up the phone. "I know just the guy for you," he said.

A little later, we were waiting for the contact to show up, the three of us, alone in his office. Sam, an experienced structural steel-worker before becoming an educator, had helped put up the building we were in. There was a warm respect between the two men. The owner felt talkative.

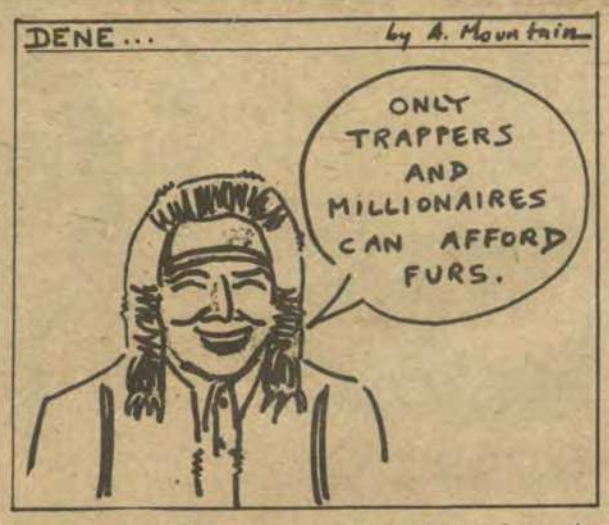
"In this business," he said, looking out the window. "You got to have a sharp eye. A sharp eye is everything. Something that looks like junk to one guy becomes an indispensable part to someone else. That's my business, always looking. The boys out in the yard, they don't know. They'e getting paid by the hour. They work, they eat lunch; they work, they go home. Me, I own the place. I have to keep my eye open all the time. I get careless, I get cleaned out."

The owner took out his wallet and pulled an old photograph from it. It was himn as a young man, sitting on the fender of a truck. "My first truck, nearly forty years ago," he said, grinning. "I was sixteen years old. Everybody laughed at me. Well, now they're not laughing anymore."

The owner lit a cigarette. "I ain't laughing either, these days," he added. "That's the problem."

"Slow?" Sam asked.

"Slow?" the owner reached under the counter. He pulled out several thick copies of a salvage business trade journal. He started to leaf through them. "Look here," he pointed with



his finger. "Auction, auction," turning the pages,"Here, here, auction, going out of business sale..." ...turning some more, then switching to another copy..."More, more, see here. Everyone of these--filled with auction notices."

"Looks like quite a few farms folding up too," Sam said.

"Look through this one, a farm journal," the owner said. Sam leafed through it. The farm journal was full of auction notices.

"In this business," the owner said. "Any given week, I can tell you of any building going up or coming down. Now, there is nothing going up, very little coming down. For a long time now, nothing."

The state of the economy became a topic then--at a junkyard in Cornwall, Ontario.

It had been a topic, too, on our way there. In fact, it has been one of our main topics for years. I guess you don't have to have a doctorate in economics to percieve that something very basic is out of whack , that the system as it is now organized is in real danger of collapse.

In our community work we are continually focusing on that--on the fact that jobs get harder and harder to find, that the cost of heat and fuel are rising steadily, that the federal and state dollars so many of our people have become dependant upon are quickly drying up. We talk about it all the time. It is one thing, though, to watch the economic news as the governments tell it--and quite another to hear the immediate prognosis of businessmen with their thumb on the real economic pulse. A junkyard, moreover, is a unique enterprise along these lines--a place where demolition and construction overlap, where the most basic pulse (the building trades) can be felt.

"I'll be frank," the owner said. "I am afraid. I have a small fortune in equipment and inventory and I keep adding what I can but let me tell you, I am afraid. I'll tell you--if I could sell today, I would sell. If I could get my money out of all this, I would live on just that."

"What we are going to do,"said Sam, "We are going to put in big gardens this summer." "You got to," the owner said.

"That money," Sam said. "If this economy collapses--what is it going to be worth?"

"With all these farms going bankrupt," the owner said. "Maybe I'll need a wheelbarrow full of it just to get me a dozen eggs."

We laughed.

"That's the feeling I get," the owner said. "Sure, who is going to guard the wheelbarrow for me? What's to keep someone from hitting me over the head for it?"

"What we are trying to do," Sam said, "is work as a community once again, different families helping each other.

The owner grimaced, tossing his head cynically. "Now, that's a lot of trouble," he said.

Now, it was lunchtime and our man had not come yet. The owner stood over by the window. The men in the yard were starting to come in. You could see them--men in greasy overalls, boots unlaced, caps on backwards on their heads. "I layed off two last week," the owner said. "The rest--I'll have to drop them soon too."

The men came in and grabbed their lunches, poured cups of coffee. As they ate, the owner gave them their afternoon assignments. They ate silently. The owner stood. When he spoke, they listened attentively. Then he didn't speak and the men sat around and ate their lunches.The owner looked out the window. He reached and turned the radio on just as the news came on.

One of the reports in the news program was about dangerous chemicals in the drinking water of a town in New Jersey. "Yeah," Sam said. "That's the same thing we got."

"What do you have?" one man asked.

"PCB's, mercury, flouride--you name it,we got it."

"That mercury," the man said. "They said not to eat the fish on the St. Lawrence--you know anything about that?"

"They started warning people not to eat it around 1970," Sam said. "One Indian community we know about in Western Ontario quite a few people have gotten sick from it. It's called Minemata disease. Destroys your nervous system."

"Well, I never stopped eating it yet," the man said. "It never killed me yet."

"It don't kill you right away," Sam said. "It accumulates. Some of them take 15 - 20 years."

"I'm in luck," the man laughed. "I ain't gonna last that long."

Sam raised his eyebrows at him. "How about your children and your grandchildren?" he said.

The man looked up from his sandwich. Then he laughed hard again, like he had a good response this time. "But that's not my problem," he said. "That's for them to deal with."

The owner looked at him and sighed, shaking his head.

Later, our man came and we made the arrangements for moving the school buildings. Everything worked out all right and yet,on the way back, there was this nagging feeling of something left unsaid. It was something about the way everybody worries about the same things--and yet their need to unite does not seem to break through the fear and the suspicions, the patterns of jealousy and dependency.

"Did you notice what that guy said about his grandchildren?" Sam said."There is a cultural difference between them and us, generally. Not many of our people would say it quite that way, even though some certainly act that way."

"Well, they got that boss and worker thing. Everybody is afraid of everybody else."

"A place like that, what binds it is only money," Sam said. "Now they don't know how to get along without it. Take the money away and all hell is going to break loose."

"One of these days," I said, "Those people are going to run out of options." And I remembered another moment when the owner had taken us upstairs to a new office he was building. In spite of his gloomy predictions, he was continuing to expand. He had built a large picture window up there that overlooked the yard and I remembered him looking out: "From here I can watch every move my men make. Nobody gets away with anything," he had said, the tone of satisfaction a veil for the real fear that seemed to dominate him.

JB.